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TEN YEARS IN INDIA; -V. 3

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THE LIFE OF A YOUNG OFFICER.

BY

CAPTAIN ALBERT HERVEY,

60TH REGIMENT OF MADRAS INFANTRY.

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IN THREE VOLUMES

VOL. III.

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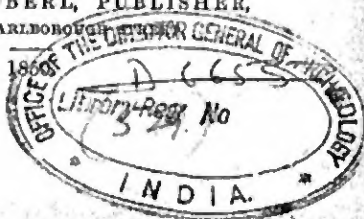


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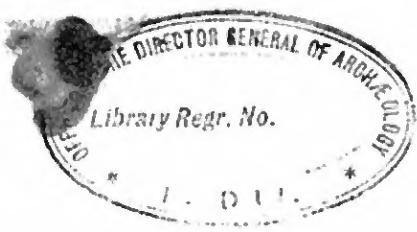
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TEN YEARS IN INDIA.

CHAPTER I.

Dinner given to the British Officers—Number of straggling Retainers—An Adjutant's Duties very arduous—Evils of the present System of Promotion—Necessity of Reform—Romantic History of the young Slave Girl—A well-meant Hoax, with good Results.

OUR garrison gave the — Foot a dinner in the Public Rooms on the occasion of their passing through. The dinner went off like all others of a similar description. There were the same dishes at each end, the same wines, the same eating, and the same drinking, the same speeches, the same toasts, the same noise, and the same bustle; and, after that, there were the smoking, the brandy, and the gin, the singing and the halloing, and all ending

by the usual finish of grilled bones, mulligatawny, and such like trash, enough to give anybody the nightmare in his sleep, and that abominable concomitant to all excesses, the splitting head-ache of the following morning.

All went off well; our guests appeared pleased with their entertainment; they marched the next morning in pursuance of their journey, some of them, I dare say, in no very enviable plight, after the excesses and indulgences of their midnight revelries. It was a long time, however, before Vellore was quite quit of the fractional portions of that regiment, for stragglers passed through every day, until people began to think that there would be no end to them. But they were all clear at last, and right glad were we, when the cantonments were free of them; for, travelling as they did, in small parties, the irregularities they committed were tiresome in the extreme, to say nothing of the discredit to the corps.

I am of opinion, that no regiment should ever break ground in the way this one did, and as many others do: not a soul should move until all is ready, and then let the whole start off together. Discipline would thus be maintained, and not suffer; the men, and followers and baggage, would be kept in a collected state, and be under the controul and surveillance of the proper authorities. But, disorganize a regiment in the manuer this one was,

and it will not be matter of wonder if good order flies to the four quarters of the globe; all manner of excesses are committed, and the consequences felt for a considerable time, to eradicate the ill effects of which will be more difficult than can possibly be conceived.

A body of troops in a disordered state is managed or organized with greater trouble and difficulty than the veriest rabble that ever collected in mob at a town riot. When once broken into small parties, discipline is at an end; it becomes a case of every man for himself; and soldiers, once led astray, are worse than little children, without any controul, without the power of acting for themselves, or the inclination to do what is correct.

Soldiers, be they Europeans or natives, can never get on without their officers; the less, consequently, they are separated from them, the better; true is it, that it is requisite, on certain occasions, they should be able to act independently, but that is not what I am remarking upon here. What I mean to argue is, that troops should never be allowed to be pulled in pieces under any ordinary circumstances whatever; the more they are kept in an embodied state, and the less they are separated from their officers, particularly on a line of march, when discipline is more necessary than in quarters, the better; and I hope, that my more experienced military readers will back me out in the truth of my observations,

made, as they are, with all deference to the opinions, on these and all other subjects, of my superiors, and without any intention on my part to intrude, whatever I may say, upon that of others who may feel disposed to think otherwise.

"There is nothing like experience," is an oft repeated and well known saying, and I found it to be too true in my own case, for I discovered, on entering upon the duties of my new appointment, that I had undertaken a task of no small magnitude, and that my situation was by no means so easy as I had imagined. I had much to learn, and the more I considered the importance of the work I had to do, the more necessary did it appear to me to apply myself with heart and soul to the duties of my office, as well as to those of the field. The latter I looked upon as comparatively easy to the former, which not only required much attention and labour of mind, but close study, with diligent and strict supervision.

My commanding officer, though a kind, good-hearted old man, was inclined to be a fidget, and, consequently, worried me out of my patience with constant and tiresome notes. And he was so fearful of anything going wrong with his newly-appointed adjutant, that he was ever on the tenter-hooks of anxiety about one thing or the other, so that what with having to go regularly to his house, attending to the office-work, settling disputes, con-

ducting courts-martial, and many other items, besides answering his innumerable notes, I had enough to do, and little time to spare.

A note-writing commanding officer is, in very truth, a plague to his staff. I had been told, by my predecessor, that he was much addicted to scribbling long letters upon most trivial matters, thereby making mountains out of mole-hills, and giving much needless trouble to everybody. I had, consequently, made up my mind to receive, at most, about two or three notes per diem; but, when they came to me by sixes and eights almost every day, with little or no abatement, I was utterly astounded, and really became quite puzzled what to do, to stop such an inconvenience. I found myself, at all hours of the day, obliged to answer these notes, when I ought to have been at something more important; and when I discovered the fact, that the more I determined to discourage such a troublesome ordeal, the more I was pestered, I became perfectly bewildered.

I resolved, however, to collect and preserve these interesting epistles, not only out of curiosity, to see how huge a bundle I should have by the end of the year, but because I knew him to be wonderfully tenacious, in his memory, of the subjects contained in them, referring me to certain ones which had been written months back, and scolding me, in no measured terms, if I had forgotten what he referred

me to, or if any of the said notes happened to be mislaid or destroyed. Every *chit* (anglicè, note), however short, was written upon the same-sized piece of paper, regularly dated, and, coming in the number which I have stated, more or less, each day, the collection soon made a tolerably sized bundle, about six or seven inches in thickness. "And who knows, major," I would say, "but we shall, one of these days, see your dispatches published to the military world? The great duke had his so published by one of his staff, and why should not I bring yours to light?"

But really and truly, that scribbling system of carrying on duty is highly objectionable, besides being very distressing to one's patience. The adjutant, exclusively of his other out-of-door duties, twice a day, has to attend, at a certain hour daily, at the commanding officer's quarters, and why should not everything be settled at that time? It is very easy for the latter to make his arrangements previously to the arrival of the former, so as to have everything done at once, to issue the order for the day, and to decide upon such other matters as may be laid before him; after which the commanding officer should have nothing more to say to his adjutant.

Each party would thus be at liberty, after a certain hour, to do what else he wished; instead of which, the one is always at his desk, scribbling those abo-

minable "*chits*," and the other unfortunate is home-tied, in hourly expectation of receiving and answering them, making him thereby do much more than is requisite, and rendering his situation, not only unpleasant, but a burden to him. I look upon a man, who is given to the practice of note-writing, as a person of a suspicious nature, who places no confidence in those with whom he has to transact business, and who lays the flattering unction to his own soul, that no one can do anything but himself, that he alone is doing his duty; that nobody else knows his own, and that he is, in fact, a very paragon of excellence as a commanding officer.

In trying to maintain the discipline of his regiment, and to carry on duty in this way, the commanding officer does more harm than good, for he worries everybody under him by those eternal productions, which tend to his own ridicule, and render him, in the eyes of all, a troublesome nuisance. A person given to note-writing, independently of being of a suspicious mistrusting character, is naturally a fidgety one, and a fidget is generally considered, by all reasonable people, to be what is termed, in common parlance, an "*old woman*;" and he who has the name of one is unfit for his command, and only suited for the Invalids, or for comfortable lodgings in Bath, or Cheltenham, both

places being famous for superannuated Indians from the three Presidencies ; far better for them, I think, than at the heads of regiments, in which situations all that they do is to worry those under them in such a way as to render their duties irksome in the extreme.

It is, however, a satisfaction (and a very consoling one, too, to know that the number of these strange characters is fast decreasing, and that the army has generally, now-a-days, a younger set of field-officers at the heads of our regiments ; men who have not those queer notions and "*fiddle-fuddle*" ideas of the old school, and who have their bodily as well as mental faculties in their prime, which enable them to carry on their duties with energy, and to undergo the trials and hardships of the soldier's life without sinking under them.

Would that promotion were a little quicker in the Indian army than it now is ! If it progresses so slowly as it does, when are we of the present day to become field-officers ? What an old set of fellows we shall be by the time we arrive at the rank of lieutenant-colonels, or general officers ! Pity is it indeed that some arrangements are not made to clear off the numbers of superannuated officers at present on the retired list, enjoying their off-reckoning funds without doing any duty to deserve the benefit ; such a riddance would give the

majors and captains a better chance of being efficient men when they find themselves at the heads of their regiments.

At the present rate, many of us can never expect to be majors under thirty-five years service, and then, what shall we be fit for? Nothing but the invalid or pension establishment! If our commanding officers of regiments were more effective, the army would be so also; but at present the class of men in general at the heads of divisions, brigades, and regiments are old and worn out, while the young and the effective are becoming non-effective, from this slowness of promotion. The off-reckoning-list could easily be done away with. Officers of a certain time of service should be made to retire upon some fixed salary, without burthening the gradation rolls to the detriment of the juniors, as is at present the case; and then only may we expect to get on; but as we now stand, there is little or no hope whatever except by purchasing out our seniors from our own resources.

But, into what a fearful amount of debt does this arrangement involve the whole army! There is scarcely a regiment but what is made to suffer very heavy stoppages in liquidation of loans from houses of agency, or the famous Agra bank, of enormous sums borrowed to buy out some worn-out major or disgusted captain; and yet there is no alternative but to purchase out those above us, and do what

we will we must borrow money, which places many in sad, sad difficulties, that they are unable to contend with. If we do not purchase, how are we to get on?

Our honourable masters ought really to take our condition into serious consideration, and make some regulations for the retirement of those who are superannuated and worn out, as well as for the advancement of the junior branches of their armies. Young and vigorous officers of reasonable standing are better calculated to keep up the efficiency of the army, and if we have not such at the heads of divisions, brigades, and regiments, Government cannot in reason expect their troops to be in that state so necessary for the safety of this immenso empire.

This is the opinion not only of such an humble individual as myself (sighing for my promotion at this present day), but it is that of others, who have had experience in the recent campaigns, and who are competent judges of the truth of the well-known observation, that an army composed of worn-out officers can never perform those duties in the field, to which they are from time to time liable, with that satisfaction which it would otherwise do were it officered by men in every way calculated by mental as well as physical qualifications.

However let us proceed with our narrative for the present. I suspect the day is not far distant

when some happy alterations will take place, and, if I am not greatly wrong, I am inclined to think that something of the kind has already been laid before the council board of our legislators in Leadenhall-street. Proof positive there has been and now is, which will show how encumbered the senior grades of our armies in India are by worn-out members, and how requisite it is that these be put out of the way, so as to bring forward a younger and more energetic class of men, whose talents and acquirements, zeal and ability, are becoming blunted by the slowness of promotion, and the utter hopelessness of their rising to those superior grades in which alone they can shine, and by which they have any prospects of gaining the celebrity and renown of which every soldier is so justly ambitious.

The events of the last war, though favourable in result, as good luck would have it, tell many a tale, which those who witnessed them can best corroborate; and show very plainly that the whole of our armies require remodelling, and being placed on a more efficient footing than they now are, in order that our troops may be better able to take the field, by their being commanded by a younger set of men, who, having a wider prospect before them of future advantages, will emulate each other in their endeavours to render their regiments as efficient as they can; whereas, as matters are con-

ducted at the present day, the old and worn-out officers at the heads of corps having nothing to look forward to but the serving their time and retiring upon their off-reckonings or pensions, which they are from length of service entitled to, have little or no energy about them; can do nothing, and will do nothing but what they are absolutely obliged to do; thus allowing matters to take their own course.

The consequences of this system are, that discipline suffers, and the officers and men, imbibing the spirit of apathy so glaring in their chief, pay no attention to their respective duties, and the regiments so commanded, very soon become little better than a mere rabble devoid of everything appertaining to the well-being of a corps, and shamefully wanting in those qualifications of the soldier which are alike requisite for their good name and fame, as well as for the correct performance of their duties, be it in the garrison, or before the enemy. We require reform, and there is no mistake on the subject.

A very romantic affair occurred at the palace inside the fort, shortly after my return to Vellore, showing what women will do when they are determined; but on this occasion determination and resolution were carried to a greater extent than is usual amongst the softer sex; and the cause of liberty having prompted the deed, my fair readers will probably peruse what I am about to relate, with in-

terest. There happened to be a young Mussulmahee girl attached to the household of Tippoo's wives. She was termed a "*loundee*" (anglicè, a slave-girl), and had belonged to the palace establishment from childhood. She had grown up to be a very fine creature, of about sixteen or seventeen years of age, and it was said that she had experienced severe treatment from the old ladies to whose authority she was subservient, to such a degree indeed that the poor girl's life was a perfect hurthen to her.

How strange and yet how true is it, that the old and shrivelled should have such a diabolical hatred towards the young and beautiful ! And it is always the case too, that the dislike is greater towards those who are not their relatives ! Old Mussulmahee women are perfect she-devils in their dislikes, and particularly so if the unfortunate being happens to be one of their own sex !

The poor girl I allude to was a case in point. She was plagued to death by the old catamarans, and her situation was anything but an enviable one. She therefore determined upon an escape, if it could be possibly accomplished, from the prison within the miserable precincts of which she had been so long immured, and where the wretched life she led was so replete with sorrow and disgust. She had no alternative but to rid herself from them at some desperate hazard, or to drag out her existence (already unbearable) to the end.

No means of freedom presented themselves, nor was there anybody to whom she could confide the secret workings of her mind, ill at ease, indeed, from daily discomfort and maltreatment, and harrowed up with feelings of intense agony and despair. She was despised and disliked from the old ladies down to the common sweepers; all alike were hostile to her projects, so that there was not one solitary friend among the whole establishment to cheer her, or to give her one word of solace or encouragement. Yet hope bade her not despair, and she buoyed herself up with that hope which whispered to her that her freedom was nigh at hand. She could not continue any longer in a place where she was treated worse than the dumb dogs which yelped in the palace-yard. To pass through the gates of the building was impossible; there were eunuchs inside, and sentries out; she could not disguise herself in man's attire, for men there were none, and if there were, she did not dare to confide the secret of her intentions to anybody for fear of detection.

What was this poor girl to do, then? How was she to escape! She must do so by fair means or by foul; but where was the outlet? The walls of the palace were high, and, if she did contrive to get herself on the top of them, how was she to descend on the other side? The fall would be a very dangerous one, but she cared not for that. She might

probably break a leg, or an arm, or even be killed on the spot; but to be a cripple, or even to incur instant death, either was preferable to the life which she had been leading. Liberty was her guiding star, and liberty she would have, come what would. She resolved trying at all events, and not even the fear of pain or of a dreadful death could divert her from her fixed purpose. She prepared for her desperate undertaking in the most cool calculating manner possible, as if indeed the anticipated fracture of a limb, the dislocation of a joint, or even the loss of life, were matters of secondary consideration.

The females of India will undergo a great deal certainly,—witness the rites of the “Suttee,” self-immolation, sacrificing their children, and other instances of devotedness so peculiar to them; and here was a glaring proof of perseverance in the cause of liberty, and of heroism worthy in every way of success. She fixed upon the time; ’twas the dark and still hour of night, a storm-threatening night, when the stars hid themselves behind the sombre curtains of murky clouds,—when the wind howled,—when the thunder crashed above head, and the forked lightning played around her; the rain poured down in torrents and drenched her to the skin, but she feared not, and undertook her enterprise with daring courage. The slave girl contrived to get herself to a window, situated almost

in a line with the top of the wall, inside a small room, which was in former times used by the ladies of the "*harem*" to sit in and enjoy the prospect round about their prison. This said window was latticed with a kind of iron net-work, so that those inside could not be visible to, or observed by, others outside; this obstruction, old and rusted, the heroic girl with little or no difficulty managed to break through, thereby making an aperture sufficiently large to admit of her getting out. This she succeeded in doing, and hanging on by the frame-work of the window sill, she trusted herself to the protection of her "*Allah*," and dropped to the ground, a height I should say of upwards of twenty feet!

It was about three o'clock in the morning when this took place; a patrol was going the rounds at the time, and happening to pass by just at that particular moment, the men composing it beheld an object falling from the window to the ground. A wild shriek rent the air as the girl was descending, and then a heavy sound reached the ears of the spectators, as the body fell on the green sward below; there was a cry of pain and agony, and all was still save the howling of the wind among the trees and adjoining buildings.

The non-commissioned who commanded the patrol, went up with his men to the spot where lay the apparently lifeless body of a female. She was

not dead, as they shortly after ascertained by her groanings, which gave evidence of intense suffering, caused no doubt by some severe bodily injury; and, as the place was not very far from the hospital, one of the party was sent to call for assistance, while the naigue (corporal) stood by and ascertained from her who and what she was, which he was able to do as she gave signs of returning reason.

"Alas!" exclaimed she, "that I should yet be alive, and be questioned by a man! What have I done that the star of my destiny should have brought me to this wretched state? I have attempted to escape from a miserable life inside the palace; a life full of sufferings; and, instead of escaping undetected, I have fallen into the hands of those who will have no pity on me! My lot is hard indeed! I shall have to go back to the palace! Alas! alas! how unfortunate I am!"

"But who and what are you?" inquired the naigue, a bandsome young Moslem; "what has caused you to jump from the window, as I but just saw you do?"

"Did you see me, indeed?" said she, "then am I doubly unfortunate! I am one of the slaves inside the accursed palace. My employers treated me with severity and harshness! I could not bear such treatment! The blood of a true Mussulmanee flows in my veins, and I determined rather

to die in attempting to escape than brook the tyranny of those old fiends any longer."

In the meantime, people came from the hospital, and the poor girl was, with much difficulty, lifted up, quite insensible from the pain she suffered, and conveyed to the female ward, where upon examination it was ascertained that she had fractured her left leg midway between the knee and the hip. Early that morning several medical men, who had come down to visit their respective patients, examined the limb and pronounced the injury to be of such a nature as would admit of setting, and eventually of healing, provided she remained quiet and allowed them to do what was necessary. This was after much persuasion and difficulty accomplished, the fracture was adjusted, splints, &c. &c. applied, and the poor creature made as comfortable as possible.

In the meantime, there was no small bubblub inside the palace, when the report and fact of Fatima Bee's escape and accident became known to the old ladies. They were perfectly furious, and vowed vengeance upon the head of the culprit. They became so excited and worked themselves to such a pitch of rage, that I verily believe the circumstance took a good year from the total of some of their lives. They sent messages innumerable to the brigadier, desiring this, that, and every thing else, declaring that the girl had disgraced them by

exposing herself to the gaze of man, and making matters worse by allowing a parcel of English doctors to handle her about and set her leg, which she ought rather to have allowed to drop off; ending their tirade by requesting that the vile wretch might never be allowed to darken the doors of the palace, but be turned out of the place as not worthy its protection.

The broken lattice was duly examined, repaired, and fastened; the room was locked up; the eunuchs, those monsters in human form, were directed to be more on the alert, to prevent a repetition of an occurrence so disgraceful to the respectability of a harem; all the "*loundees*" were brought together and warned of the consequences of any attempts to quit the palace, (there were doubtless several of them sighing for their liberty,) and every precaution taken to preserve that secrecy and quiet which had so long reigned undisturbed among them.

The old women fancied themselves young again, (it was but a flight of imagination,) and allowed their minds to be disturbed by visions of ropeladders, secret entrances, desperate and enterprising lovers, and other nonsense of which no one else ever dreamed or thought; their rest was disturbed; their peace of mind received a shock from which no one knew when they would ever recover, and the whole interior economy of the palace under-

went a revolution, a sort of convulsion, as it were, which caused the inmates thereof to tremble with alarm lest some dreadful event, some monstrous misfortune, were about to befall them.

But no such thing, fancied or real, horrible or portentous, occurred; the poor old creatures wagged on as usual; the young women sighed for liberty, and the unfortunate Fatima Bee, after a lengthened sojourn in the garrison-hospital, during which period she had been seen and admired by many, (for as I before said she was beautiful,) at last recovered the use of her leg, and became what she had so long wished for, and had so nobly attempted to achieve, a free-woman; and, finally, the lawful wife by *shades* (marriage) of the aforesaid handsome Mussulman naigue, who, on the occasion of his first seeing her fall, happened to catch a glimpse of her features, and became enamoured at first sight of the lovely fugitive.

Women when once seen by men are considered, by Moslems, as polluted; and this poor creature had become so in every respect, if the circumstance of her having been seen (and the naigue saw her himself) could possibly contaminate any one; the gallant soldier should not, according to his creed and the customs of his sect, have connected himself with one who had so disgraced the rules of decorum. But she was a beauty and no mistake; he thought her so, and cared not for caste prejudices,



so made up his mind to win and wear her. After her recovery from her late accident, she found an asylum in the house of a distant relative in the native town, and with him she resided in comfort and seclusion.

The naigue found her out, and asked her hand in marriage. To become the lawful wife of a dashing soldier, after having been buffeted and benten as the slave of a set of old hags, was a bargain too good to be despised, so the suitor was accepted not only by the relative but by the lovely girl herself, who had also seen and become smitten with the handsome manly countenance of her gallant lover. The arrangements were made, and the marriage-ceremony performed in great state, and the young bride was made happy, and exulted in the issue of her undertaking. She was heard to say, that she recommended all females similarly situated to cast off the trammels of bondage and to be free at all hazards, as she herself had done. What did the old ladies in the palace say to the marriage? They, one and all, declared, that she was a sancy, bold-faced, impudent bussy, and wondered what she would do next!

This my narrative is, as I before said, intended not only to amuse but to be useful to those who may peruse it; I am now, therefore, going to relate a laughable trick which was played off upon a

young man belonging to one of the regiments in the garrison. I mention this little incident not with a view to exposing any one, but merely to show my youthful readers the necessity of officers, when on duty, being ever on the alert and acting up to those rules and regulations which are provided for the proper performance of everything connected with the profession. A red-coat and carelessness can never be friends. The two will never pull well together, they can never walk arm in arm, but will be sure to fall out sooner or later. An officer, particularly a young one, cannot be too careful in doing his duty, and avoiding all risk of any accidents by that boasted neglect which is so prominent an evil amongst all beginners. But to my story. The individual I am alluding to had been one day talking, very foolishly too, about the inutility of officers being so careful while on guard, as some appeared to be; so particular in every little minutiae of duty, so nonsensically punctilious about trifles; never taking off any portion of their uniforms or accoutrements, so ridiculously careful about going the rounds, inspecting reliefs, visiting sentries, and so forth.

"As for me," said he, "I always make it a rule to be quite at home while on guard; I take things very comfortably, and invariably turn into bed in my sleeping-drawers."

"You do," exclaimed an older officer present, "what, take off your uniform coat, sword, and sash?"

"Oh yes!" cried he, "catch me going to bed with such companions. 'Tis bad enough to have such things on one's body before eight o'clock in the morning and at other hours, but defend me from being buckled up longer than is necessary."

"Then," said his friend, "you do not think it absolutely necessary to be dressed and armed at all times while on guard!"

"Of course not!" replied the other, "where is the necessity?"

"Granted that there is none," rejoined the oldster; "but supposing every man on the guard were to divest himself of his uniform and accoutrements, what a pretty turn out you would all be!"

"We would, decidedly," replied the youngster, "and what is more, I should think a very strange one, too!"

"Not at all strange; for where the officer sets the example, the men can scarcely be expected not to follow it. What say you to that, young man?"

"The fellows know nothing of what goes on in the officer's room, and they would not dare to do what they know so well to be wrong."

"Bravo, bravissimo!" exclaimed the old band, "then you do allow it to be wrong? And yet you say there is no harm in doing what you (as well as

the men) know perfectly well to be a breach of discipline? Capital reasoning is your's, I must acknowledge. But you say that the men are not aware of what goes on in the officer's room? I should fancy quite the contrary; for there must necessarily be intercourse between the officer and his guard, and do you suppose that what they see in the officer's room is not made subject of remark in that of the men?"

"There may be wrong in it, I will allow," replied the griffin, evidently losing ground in his argument, "though I cannot possibly see any harm, particularly in these fearful times, when the only enemy a man has to contend with, while on such duty, is the dreadful heat for an advance-guard, ennui for the attacking columns, and those abominable mosquitoes bringing up the rear, the acme of all that is calculated to make a man swerve from the direct regimen of military discipline, and induce him to attempt to render his condition on such occasions as nearly approaching to the comfortable as his situation will admit."

"You do not appear to be able to prove that there is no harm in it; but I can, and also that there is much wrong in any one item of dereliction of your duty. In the first place, there is the evil example you set to those under you, and its consequences; and, in the next, your direct disobedience of strict orders on the subject; besides, supposing

that while you were undressed, or comfortably snoozing in your long drawers, your guard was turned out for some purpose, a disturbance, a fire, or any other thing; or visited by the commanding officer or the captain of the day, your presence would immediately be required, the men (all ready dressed) would fall in, but where would you be? A thousand incidents might require your attention or superintendence, and if you are not ready dressed and armed, how could you possibly perform your duty? Not in your *pajamas* surely, could you?"

"Oh! I would manage to be ready in sufficient time," exclaimed the youth; "I would dress quick enough."

"You would, would you? Well, I hope, my dear boy, you may never have occasion to be tested; but mark me, the time may come when you will change your way of thinking, which I cannot help saying is at present anything but soldier-like, or sensible."

"You are one of the old school," said the ensign, "and much too particular in these petty matters."

"You say correctly," rejoined his companion, "I am one of the old school; but that old school is one in which I have learned many a useful lesson, and in which, I hope, ere long, you will also be able to gain a little more experience than you at present seem to have. For my own part, I look

upon a man who throws off his coat when on duty as no soldier, and he who is no soldier should never wear the coat of one. This is my opinion; whatever yours may be, you really do not appear to know yourself, for I never yet heard a person, calling himself a soldier and an officer, holding forth such an absurd argument as you have just done. However, do you look out. The very next time you are on guard, you may be put to the proof, and I doubt much if you will be of the same opinion the next morning."

"Nothing will convince me," replied the griffin, "that there can be any harm in taking off one's things of a night and going to bed as if at home. I have done so every time regularly, ever since I first went on guard as supernumerary."

"Whosoever taught you such an unsoldierlike trick, did wrong decidedly, and an injustice not only to yourself, but to the profession; and, all I can say is, that he must have been as great a griffin as yourself; so now I'll wish you a good morning, and a little more of what is termed common sense in that cranium of yours, than you seem to have."

And here the conversation terminated. In a few days after, this young man mounted in command of the main guard. The individual whom we have mentioned above, as arguing with him, and another, engaged themselves to dine that day in the fort on purpose, and resolved upon playing him a trick, by

way of proving, if possible, the folly of his line of argument, and the impropriety of his making himself comfortable, as he called it, while on guard. So, about a quarter to ten o'clock that night, the two friends left the house where they had been dining, and walked very quietly down to the main guard, where they obtained the sentry's permission to go up stairs into the officer's room, as they wished to speak with him for a moment.

"The officer is comfortably asleep in his bed, sir," replied the man. "I went up there a short while ago, to deliver a report, but found him fast asleep."

"However, we will go up," said one of the officers, "we want to get a cheroot to smoke on our way home."

And away they went up stairs, making as little noise as they possibly could, and found my young gentleman in the state the sentry had mentioned. There he lay, as cozy as a man could be, with his sleeping drawers on, the mosquito curtains nicely tucked in, snoring most lustily. This was a capital opportunity, and they determined to avail themselves of it accordingly. They first removed the sleeper's sword and belt, and placed them behind one door; after that they concealed his jacket, sash, pantaloons, and stock, behind another, the boots and cap were deposited behind a third; the lamp was burning on the table in the room, and the servant was snoozing

in the adjoining one, the door of which they quietly closed, after which they moved his slippers away, and in lieu of them placed a huge brass basin, full of water; this done, they blew out the light, and proceeded to the final part of the trick. One stood behind the door, and the other taking hold of the head of the bedstead, lifted it up and let it fall again with a thump on the floor, at the same time calling into the ear of the unconscious subaltern, "Guard, turn out! Fire! Where's the drummer! Where's the officer of the guard!" After which, he also retreated behind a door, and witnessed the consequences through the opening. He saw a sight which indeed was truly ludicrous and amusing.

The affrighted subaltern, aroused from his sweet and comfortable nap, jumped up, not knowing what he was doing, and in the hurry of the moment planted both his feet plump into the basin, which he upset, deluging the floor with the contents; the next moment, as he awoke, he groped about in the dark for the chair on which he had so snugly arranged all his traps, but not finding them there, he began to curse and to swear in a state of rage indescribable, calling for his servant most frantically, and sending him to a certain place over and over again.

But the domestic heard not his master's call, as the door was shut, and he fast asleep. The poor

bewildered lad knew not what to do, or where to look for his things. "What could have become of them?" thought he, "they must be in the next room; now I remember I put them there." So he crawled towards the door and entered it, paddling in the water with which the floor was inundated; he knocked his bare legs against a chair, and became infuriated with the pain; he bellowed out "boy," again, yet no one answered him.

It so happened, that when he was so suddenly and unceremoniously roused out of his sleep, the havildar of the guard had begun to muster his men for the relief, and upon hearing the clanking of the men's firelocks, and the words of command, the bewildered lad really fancied that the guard had actually turned out, so going to the balustrade, he called down to the havildar to "wait a little, as he would be down in a moment," thereby unwittingly detaining the reliefs when they should have started. The two mischievous trick-players, in the mean time, contrived to sneak down stairs, and in passing away from the guard-room below, told one of the men to take up a light into the officer's room, as he wanted one, saying which they made their escape, and got home as quickly as possible, highly delighted with the success of their scheme, and determined on having a good laugh at their victim the following morning.

The reader may imagine the disclosure which

the light made to the astonished subaltern ! The servant was roused, the scattered things collected, and the water on the floor dried up ; the sub dressed himself in a dreadful hurry, sending down again to say that the guard was to wait for him ; and he put himself into such a state of excitement that, added to the dreadful heat of the weather, the perspiration poured from him in torrents, and made him worse.

The dressing was at last accomplished, and he went down to, what he expected, his guard ; instead of which he discovered that the men whom he had so long detained, were neither more nor less than the reliefs, which had been standing there for nearly half an hour. Poor fellow ! What a stato was he in ! Who could it have been that had given the alarm, roused him from his sleep, put him in such a state of fright ? And, above all, where had the parties gone !

The sentry was at last questioned, and he stated that two gentlemen had gone up into the guard-room to speak to the officer, &c. &c. The murder was out, and upon a moment's reflection, the conversation above recorded burst upon his recollection, and he immediately came to the very satisfactory conclusion that the whole affair was entirely a trick, and that he had been hoaxed most undoubtedly, notwithstanding which, however, he saw clearly the folly of his argument on the subject of divesting

himself of his clothes while on guard, and resolved to take the hint in the light in which it was intended. And herein he acted wisely, proving himself much more a man of good sense than he had hitherto done.

The trick was one played at a hazard, but it succeeded nevertheless. The young officer met the two who had played it, the day following; there was a good laugh at him, though he himself took it seriously to heart, and expressed himself most gratefully to both, for the friendly part they had acted towards him, declaring that nothing would ever induce him to act so foolish a part again as that of which he had made such a boast.

Let the above be a warning to all young military men. Soldiers on duty should ever be harnessed, and if sleep they must, it should be with *one eye open*. If the superior is caught napping, what will the inferior do? An officer should be above infringing an order, and should ever bear in mind that when he does so, he does a thing of which if a poor private soldier is found guilty, he would, in all probability, be the first to punish him. Any further comments are needless, I hope; the folly of the young man's line of argument will always speak for itself, and I can only trust, sincerely, that those who may be of the same childish way of thinking will turn over a new leaf, and think so no more.

CHAPTER II.

Danger of Fire in the Lines during the Land-winds—Thatch-sellers—Incendiarism—Inefficiency of Government Provisions for extinguishing Fires—Loss of Property to the Troops—Arrangements for extinguishing Fires—Stringent Measures against Incendiarism necessary—Army Evils—Danger of using Guns made in India—Mutilation of the Serjeant-Major—Advice to young Sportsmen regarding the Use of their Fowling-pieces.

DURING the dry, hot, sultry weather, when everything exposed to the influence of the sun is parched and withered up, and the ground itself gives strong and convincing indications of opening, by cracks and fissures in all directions, sighing, as it were, for the cooling moisture of the absent and lingering monsoon, and when all nature assumes that arid aspect so peculiar to the season, the greatest care is necessary in the use of fires or lights inside houses, and particularly in those inhabited by natives. The least spark alighting on any substance is almost certain of bursting out into a destructive flame, reducing every house to ashes in an incredibly short space of time. The prevalence, at that period

of the year, of the terrible land-winds, which blow with unabated fury from hour to hour, serves to ignite the slightest particle, and create a blaze, which all the efforts of man cannot overcome.

The natives generally perform all their culinary work inside their huts or hovels, and, strange to say, they always contrive to do so close to some combustible matter, either the thatch, or a bundle of straw, or dry wood, or their clothes; conflagrations are, therefore, constantly occurring in the native towns and villages, or among the lines of the soldiery, followed by such calamitous consequences, that the visitation is attended with enormous loss to the poor sufferers, the effects of which, upon their scanty means, are greater than I can possibly describe, and from which it is a very long time ere they can recover themselves.

Independently of such sad drawbacks, the trouble and vexation caused by such occurrences are trying in the extreme, and, when I inform the reader that I have witnessed so many as three or four fires in the men's lines in one day, the troops having to turn out each time, he will be able to form some conception of what we have to undergo in endeavouring to put out the flames, and prevent the whole of the huts being swept away by their force. I am really afraid to say how many bouses have been burned down at one fell swoop of the devouring elements; let it suffice, that the number

is considerable, and the consequent damage done equally so.

The fury of the scorching blast of the land-wind adds to the fury of the fire; the sight is truly appalling, and the heat is so great, that I have oftentimes almost fainted under its influence. It is, indeed, matter of surprise, that no lives are lost. I have witnessed many of these fires, and have never yet known a single instance of any one having been burned, or even injured by the flames.

During our stay at Vellore, and at the time of the year I have mentioned, we had many such conflagrations, not only in our own lines, but in those of other corps, as also among the native huts, in every direction; and it always happened, somehow or other, that the bugles would sound, and the drums beat, just as we were about commencing our dinner in the evening, a most inconvenient time of the day the reader will allow. How our hungry young subs would grumble and growl at being obliged to relinquish their comfortable meal and well-cooled wines; to exchange the clean white jacket for the buckled-up uniforms, and to be going into the midst of burning huts, to get covered with dirt and black from head to foot in helping to extinguish the flames, pulling down houses, throwing water over the fiery ruins, and bawling themselves hoarse in giving orders to do this, that and the other.

I remember one young fellow, who was always particularly neat and dandified about his person, and who invariably came out with some bitter invectives against the profession on such occasions, sweetening his complaints with the augur of various oaths and execrations, and vowing, that if he had known he should have been obliged to do the duties of fireman, he would not have entered the service!

"Fireman!" exclaimed an old captain; "what are you made of? A soldier should be able to do anything, everything! Go through fire and smoke, and eat it too, if necessary! Why should you grumble, young man! Are you not paid for your liire, and are you a bit better than your comrades? You are afraid, I suppose, of soiling those delicate white hands, or of disarranging those luxuriant locks, eh? Pahaw, my boy! Be a man! Do your duty, whatever it is, and never grumble! What a bad example to those who are serving under you! Why did you 'list? Why did you take the shilling? Don't talk any more nonsense, but come along! I'll have a basin of water, soap, clean towels, brush and comb, eau de cologne, and lavender-water, all ready for you when you come back again from this very arduous task!"

This ashamed the young spark out of his grumbling; but this turning out at such hours was really and truly a great nuisance, and became more so, from their frequency; but what was more annoying

than anything else, was the circumstance of our knowing that the trouble we were put to was the consequence of premeditated mischief on the part of a set of rogues, in nine cases out of ten, who went about for the purpose, as I will presently show the reader.

There is a certain class of natives in every place, who earn their livelihood by building the mud walls and huts of the people, and who are always employed in erecting and constructing the lines of the troops. These folks are of a particular sect, or caste, and are, consequently, interested in each other's gains and employments. While some are engaged in raising the walls, others procure the materials for the roofs, such as bamboos, and palmira or coconut-tree leaves, which they dry and manufacture into a sort of matting, for the outer covering of the buildings.

These supplies are brought for sale, and are bought up by those requiring them; and, at certain seasons of the year, before the setting in of the rains, the natives lay in stores of such and other requisites for the thatching and putting into order of their domiciles. The individuals above alluded to, in order to ensure a sale for their wares, employ secret agents from among their own sect, who go about the villages and lines, and slyly insert pieces of slow-match, or burning tinder, under the thatches of the houses, or huts. The dry rotten leaves, or

straw, afford an easy prey to the fire, which, being fanned by the violent gusts of wind, very soon raises a conflagration, laying all in heaps of ruins before the least thing can be done or contrived to check the progress of the devastating flames.

The above is a common trick, but one which it is difficult to detect, for the causes of fires being always attributed to the carelessness of the inmates, either in their cooking or lights, the real mischief-makers escape with impunity, and thus oblige the very poor people, who are the sufferers, to purchase from those who are the sole originators of all their discomforts and disasters. The villanous rascals generally contrive to be prowling about in the evenings, when it is dark, so that, as soon as the fire shows itself, they easily get away, or come running to the spot, under the pretence of being innocent spectators, of whom crowds congregated, so as to render all attempts at putting out the fire a matter of difficulty.

Our people contrived, one evening, to catch one of these rascally "*Swings*," red-handed, in the very act of stuffing a piece of burning rag into the thatch of one of our men's huts. The poor wretch was very much alarmed, and loudly protested innocence, as a matter of course. Catch blackey doing anything wrong; he is sure to deny it. But this poor fellow had every reason to be frightened; for, no sooner was he detected, than the men surrounded him,

vociferating loudly, "Hang him up! Hang him up at once!" And one of the fellows had actually put a rope round his neck, when the officer of the day, who happened to be in the lines at the time, came to the spot, and prevented anything further taking place, otherwise the offender would have had a swing for the trouble he had taken in attempting to burn down the huts.

Government allows a certain number of fire-hooks and buckets, for the use of every regiment, to be employed in the event of fires. The former are huge, heavy, unwieldy things; and the latter too small; not half the size of what is requisite. The former are intended to pull down the huts, but the men cannot handle them, in consequence of their weight; and the water thrown from the latter serves to increase the fury of the fire, instead of putting it out. If each regiment, in a garrison or cantonment, were to be supplied, instead of the above, with a good serviceable fire-engine, to be kept and considered as "barrack appurtenances," they would be much more effectual than those little thimbles full of water supplied by the buckets aforesaid.

Our sepoy's lost much property by these frequent calamities, exclusively of their huts, the re-building and re-thatching of which came heavily upon their scanty purses. Everything that can be got out, on such an occasion, is thrown promiscuously on the ground, and the many spectators (light-fin-

gered ones also) find no difficulty in helping themselves, and carrying off whatever they can lay their hands on. The noise and confusion caused by the fire, the crowds of people, and the darkness, materially assist these rogues in making off with their booty; indeed it not unfrequently happens that the men's families rob one another, and I can recount several instances which I have myself witnessed, where the old women have fought with each other for the property of a neighbour, whose house has been burning, and he himself busy in attempting, at great risk, to save something from the ruins.

The crackling of the wood and bamboo, the shouting of the men, the yelling of the women, and the crying of the children, render the duty of attempting to preserve order a matter of no small difficulty, and the preventing the thieving is the most difficult of all; for, when the things are thrown about in the way they are, all the vigilance of the officers and men is of no avail; the great mischief done can, therefore, be easily conceived; the discipline of the troops also suffers materially, and it takes considerable time before the men can recover from the shock of such a disastrous visitation.

. The way was contrived, whenever a fire broke out, was to have a working party always ready, told off at the evening roll-call parade. These men, under the command of non-commissioned officers,

were divided into three parties. Some of one party were appointed to mount the tops of the houses nearest to the fire, and pull down their roofs, whilst the remainder threw water upon those furthest from the fire, so as to prevent their catching, from the innumerable sparks falling on them. Another party was employed in fetching water from the nearest wells ; and the third threw the water on the flames. In addition to this arrangement, there was always a night line-picquet, which mounted at sunset, and which furnished sentries all round the lines, besides affording a strong party on the spot in the event of fire, to keep off the crowd, and to protect property. The fire-hooks and pails or buckets are brought into play by the extinguishing party ; but, as I said before, they are of little or no use, and do more harm than good, so we were obliged to adopt other means to stop the fire spreading, and we found the best method to be that of pulling down the roofs nearest to, and damping those furthest from the fire.

I frequently obliged our fatigue-parties to practise as if at drill, to make them expert, though there was not much necessity for that, there being so many conflagrations at one place or another, at which our men were invariably employed, that they became first-rate firemen, and proved themselves most useful on every occasion.

Our commanding officer wrote a whole volume

of orders, on taking charge of the regiment, and among them was a long lecture about what was to be done to prevent like occurrences, and how to put them out, if any such accidents did befall us; but all the vigilance and care, and all the orders in the world, could not prevent them; for the men's lines are so open, and there is such a perpetual thoroughfare, of all descriptions of people, at all times of the day and night, that it is impossible to distinguish the residents from those who have nothing to do with them; and there are so many people residing in the lines with the soldiery, that there is no knowing who is a stranger and who is not.

It is often the case that fires originate from the mischievous intentions of people living in the lines, who, out of some private malice or revenge, will set fire to his neighbour's house, and think nothing of having done so. I have known of one man, while in liquor, burning down almost the whole of one company's huts, because he imagined that one of the havildars had ill-treated his brother, a private in that company: but I think that fires most frequently happen from the rascality of the thatch-sellers, who make a regular business of it, and consider themselves perfectly justified in doing so.

There are no sentries over the men's lines during the day, and at night only four, one on each side of the quadrangle. The extent of each side is upwards of a hundred yards, and a sentry's beat is

not allowed to exceed ten, so that while he is patrolling towards one flank of his post, a distance of about five yards, the rascal "*swing*" with his bit of slow match, or burning tinder, steals up in the dark, inserts it under the thatch of the nearest house, and is off without even the knowledge of the sentry, who never sees him at all.

The fire forthwith bursts out, the cause of it is never known, and the blame is put upon the unfortunate inmate, who, if he should happen to be awake, is accused of having allowed the sparks from his cooking place to settle on his clothes, or straw, or whatever it may be; and, if he should have happened to have been sleeping, he is blamed for not having put his lamp out, or some such fault, while the real cause of the calamity is never even thought of by any one; so, as I said before, it is a matter of the greatest difficulty to prevent these villains from setting fire to the huts, whenever they wish to dispose of their materials for building or thatching.

The only way to put a stop to such mischief, that I could think of, was, to have a certain number of men (out of uniform) always on the look-out; two or three of each company, in their respective lines. These being obliged to stay in their lines all day, their comrades were made to do their duty for them at barracks, &c. By this plan not a single stranger could possibly be seen about without being

questioned by these men, and if in any way suspicious, they were immediately taken up and duly examined.

I found this system succeed most satisfactorily, and by being strictly acted up to, as was the case with us, it effectually prevented those melancholy occurrences which laid our men's houses in ruins, destroyed their property, rendered them miserable for a long time, and involved them in pecuniary difficulties, against which they were not able to struggle, and from which they could not extricate themselves. A fire of the description I have detailed is ruination to the poor sepoys, for they have not only the many demands on their poverty-stricken pockets, already dwelt upon, but the circumstance entails an extra expense, (exclusively of loss of property,) which they are not able to afford. It often happens that the whole of their regimental suits are destroyed; a fresh supply of necessaries must be provided, and all out of their own pay!

The results of such a visitation being, therefore, of so serious a nature, and attended with such disastrous consequences, to more parties than one, the necessity of taking every precautionary step, so as to prevent the occurrences, appears the greater, and I think if our rulers were to adopt some stringent measures against these incendiaries, so as to set a salutary example to others, they would be checked at once; and if, as I before proposed, good service

able fire-engines were to be kept in the lines of each regiment, ready for use, there would not be that deplorable loss of property to which our soldiery are subjected from time to time whenever the dry season comes on, and whenever those villanous thatch-venders choose to send out their "*swings*" for the purpose of opening a market for the sale of their stock.

Supposing even that such fires were accidental, the men have not the wherewithal to extinguish them; now if there were an engine or two on the spot, the quantity of water poured upon the flames would check them at once; whereas, that thrown by the buckets only serves to increase them. I look upon fires, robberies, gambling, quarrelling, drinking, intriguing, and the many other irregularities which take place in a regiment as proofs of something rotten in the state of its interior economy. All take their "*first head and spring*" from laxity of discipline, which, I am sorry to say, too often exists amongst the native ranks, unheeded and unchecked; unheeded, because people will not take the trouble to notice them; and unchecked, because they know not the mode of doing so.

This proves how requisite it is for the European officers of all ranks to be ever on the alert in the performance of all the minutiae of their respective duties; and for the head of the corps to supervise the whole economy of his important charge with

that strictness and untiring watchfulness, so as to render it incumbent on all to use their utmost endeavours to prevent those lamentable occurrences and disgraceful proceedings which are at all times so dangerous to the good name and well-being of a regiment.

With the hope then, that what I may say will really and truly be of some utility to the younger branches of the service, I shall probably have occasion hereafter to touch upon one or two other matters, merely with a view to show and expose the various irregularities which do exist. People generally have an idea that the life of a regimental officer is one of idleness, with nothing to do except drawing his pay ; but this is entirely a mistake.

If an officer does his duty as he ought, he will find enough, and more than enough, to keep his mind as well as his body actively employed from one month's end to the other ; it is astonishing when we come to put our shoulder to the wheel how much work there is to get through ; I can speak from experience, as I found it to be the case when in command of a company, and was obliged for my own comfort's sake (to say nothing of the credit), to apply myself most actively to the duties of my charge. But when I came to perform the more arduous and important work of the adjutancy, I saw how much I had under-rated the difficulties of my situation, and how much more I had to do

than I had ever calculated. Some people's difficulties present themselves in the shape of a fidgety, note-writing, restless, suspicious, old commanding officer, who invariably renders his duties and his situation anything but a sinecure, and who, instead of giving credit where it is due, always makes it a rule to take that credit to himself, and looks upon any good, which the abilities, zeal, and exertions of the adjutant may give rise to, as emanating entirely from himself, instead of attributing such to the *primam mobile* of the vast machinery which he has the management of, and without whose co-operation and assistance all his efforts would be of little or no avail.

Let us, however, drop the subject *pro tempore*; the day is not far distant when men of this description will no longer clog the service, but betake themselves to their homes, where I wish them all the happiness and comfort and rest, to which they are so justly entitled after all the troubles and toils of a lengthened career in India, extending most of them to almost half a century. A quiet home is the best place for worn-out old soldiers, most decidedly,—there can be no mistake on the subject.

I was one day taking a peep at the hospital inside the fort (it is an abominable locality, I repeat, for the sick); just to see how matters were conducted (an adjutant should have his eyes upon everything), and how our worthy little medico and

his subordinates were getting on. I had not been there very long, when a sick dooly was brought into the yard, which, from the appearance of the men, gave evidence of having come some distance. From the inside of this dooly was lifted a miserable looking European, who seemed on the point of death, so emaciated and wan was his face, that he looked more like a corpse than a living being. His left arm was bandaged up, and his clothes were covered with blood. The conveyance in which he had come was not one of the regular government sick doolies, but a wretched apology for such a thing, picked up, as I supposed, in some country town for the occasion.

Upon inquiry from one of the bearers, I was told that the poor invalid was the serjeant-major of one of the Native Infantry regiments stationed to the southward, that he was travelling on leave up to Bangalore, and had halted at a village where a native had brought him intelligence that there were thieves at hand who intended to attack him, and that he had better be prepared for them. This the poor man did. He loaded his gun, and put his party in battle array.

In the course of the night there was a cry of "*Chor! chor!*" (thief! thief!) and the gallant fellow sallied forth with his gun, and fired it off in the direction from whence the outcry proceeded.

This was attended with fatal result to the man, for the gun burst and shattered his left hand in a most dreadful manner. The thieves must have been scared away, for they never came near him. The wound bled profusely; there was no medical aid at hand, and he would have bled to death but for the assistance of his wife, or servant, or somebody, who contrived to tie up the mangled limb so effectually as to stop the hemorrhage, and so saved his life.

The wound was left in that state, and had been so for about a week, when he came into Vellore, the nearest place where he could obtain advice and assistance. Poor man! He must have suffered dreadful agonies during the time it took to reach the place! The whole arm was considerably swollen, and upon examination, the hand was found so much lacerated, and there were such evident symptoms of mortification, that the surgeons came to the decision to have it taken off above the elbow. This was done, and the sufferer found instant relief, but it was only of temporary duration, for a second operation had to be performed in consequence of the mortification having extended higher up. This was gone through with manly bearing on the part of the patient, and fortunately terminated successfully. Had the mortification extended further, it would probably have killed him; as it was, however, the stump healed in a short

time, and he was convalescent in less than a month after his first admittance into hospital; so much for a sound constitution.

I had a conversation with him shortly after the operation, and he informed me that the gun, which was the cause of his misfortune, was one that had been made in the country, and that he had purchased it from a native. This at once accounted for the accident; nine out of ten burst sooner or later, and I would strongly advise young Indians never to be so foolish as to throw away their money in the purchase of such truly dangerous weapons; to use a gun made in the country is downright madness, and were I to see anybody but a nigger firing out of one, I would put him down at once as being a fit inmate for a lunatic asylum!

In the first place, such articles are composed of unsound materials; the iron is bad, full of flaws and other defects, so that it stands to reason that the explosion of powder will cause them to burst. In the next place, they are so badly put together, that in truth they are even dangerous when loaded to be touched. I would sooner put my hand into the fire than pull the trigger of the best of them!

None but natives know how to manage these articles, and how they do contrive to keep themselves from harm I cannot conceive; but a native gun, in the hands of an European, is almost sure to burst. People abuse the Birmingham guns, and

think them unsafe. I do not agree with this opinion, for I shot out of a regular old "*Brummagem*" for years, and I would never wish to fire out of a better gun in all my life; but, as to using a country-made rattle-trap affair, I would not do such a thing were I to be paid for it.

The poor serjeant-major is an instance of the danger which a man runs into in using such weapons. If the barrel does not burst, the stock is sure to be shivered to pieces, or the nipple will fly into your eye, or the lock take a leap into the air, perhaps dig itself into your forehead, or carry away one of your fingers. I recollect one of my servants having a gun of this description. He was for ever bringing it to me to do something to it. He went out shooting one day, did this "*sporting matey*," and returned home minus half of one of his fingers, a piece of his nose cut away, and a large hole in his barrel! He never used it again, nor any other one of those manufactured in his own country.

And, now I am on the subject of guns, i. e. fowling-pieces, I may as well say a few words by way of advice to young sportsmen in India, with regard to the keep and management of their guns, rifles, and pistols; a matter of no small difficulty, and requiring much care and constant attention. We will suppose that the griffin brings out with him a double-barrelled gun, a rifle, and a pair of

pistols, all articles of some value, which have probably cost "*the governor*" a good sum of money. It is more likely too, than otherwise, that the possessor of such a beautiful turn out knows nothing, or, if anything, very little indeed about them.

The chances are, therefore, that they are seldom or ever looked after; seldom or ever touched; always dirty, and always rusty. The servant generally has the cleaning of them, and, being as ignorant as his master, in nine cases out of ten, contrives to spoil them, by drenching them inside and out with oil; rubbing off all the browning; then taking off the locks, and pulling them to pieces; screwing and unscrewing the nipples; scraping the varnish from the stock; in fact, doing everything that he ought not to do, and completely ruining, in a few days, what ought to be kept with the greatest care, and last a man for a whole century.

A griffin is not so fortunate as to have guns always given him whenever he likes; such good luck only comes once to his share, so that he should take particular pains in preserving those he has, and to leave them to be spoilt by his own carelessness, or that of his servants, is not the best way to tend towards their preservation. If you care for your guns, if you are anything of a sportsman, you should look after them yourself; you should clean them yourself; and, what is more, you should keep them under lock and key, so as to prevent blackey

using them during your absence, which he is very apt to do.

As to lending a gun to a friend, I have heard say that it should never be done. I think the wisdom or folly of doing so depends entirely on the individual to whom you lend it. If he should be a thorough sportsman, there cannot possibly be harm; it ought to be a pleasure to you to see your gun well used. But to lend it to anybody who scarcely knows the difference between a fowling-piece and a ploughshare, a man must indeed be a blockhead to be guilty of such folly.

So be careful to whom you lend; it is better avoided altogether, if possible, and although at times you cannot help doing it, still too frequent a repetition is objectionable. That prince of sportsmen, Colonel Hawker, gives excellent hints and directions for the keep and care of guns, &c. in our own country; the same rules apply to India, with a few exceptions, and those are only acquired from experience, and depend entirely on the individual, as well as the climate in which he is located.

People at home have very queer notions relative to the climate of the East. They think it is just the same at Ferozepore as at Cape Comorin; all hot, hot, hot! Everything, indeed, connected with India carries along with it a hot, burning, grilling character. They have no conception of a cold climate, a mild climate, a damp climate, or a temperate climate;

but every place must be hot, and all the arguments in the world are insufficient to reason them out of such opinions; every person saying that some parts of India are as cold as in Europe, is put down as telling a downright fib; they will not believe that, although there is heat, there can also be cold. How prejudiced are our good folks in the west!

I consider the climate of India to be very variable; and the mere a man travels about, the more he will find it to be so; and, as is the temperature of the place in which he resides, so must he regulate his mode of living; so must he clothe himself; so must he take exercise, more or less; and so must he (if a sportsman) indulge himself in the amusements of the field; and so must he look after the keep of his guns. On the coast, they must be well attended to; the air is damp and impregnated with salt, which occasions rust in everything of iron or steel. In the interior the air is again dry, and, when the land-winds blow, care is requisite not to expose them to their influence; the heat injures the stocks materially, the upper part of them cracking right in two, and then the cases get completely spoiled, by warping and cracking.

As soon as a gun has been used, it must be thoroughly cleaned, wiped dry, and then rubbed slightly over with a little "*mercurial ointment*," which is the best preservative against rust, or, if that is not procurable, a very little salad oil. The

locks must seldom, if ever, be taken off; once, perhaps, in the course of the season is as much as is necessary, and then the interior, or chamber of of the stock, must not be touched with oil; it only sinks into the wood, swells and rots it, and renders the machinery of the lock itself stiff and uncertain. The nipples also should be taken off as seldom as possible; it is not necessary to do it at all; the frequency wears out both *male* and *female* screws, and renders them very liable to fly out when used.

The barrels should be washed out with hot water, and I think the best thing to remove the leading is *fullers-earth*, on the outside of a rag; this cannot harm, in any way. Some people do not approve of this, but prefer a cleaning wire, which, in my opinion, only scratches the inside of the barrels, which must necessarily derange the course of the shot, as it makes its way out. By this I mean that the shot cannot fly so correctly as when the interior of the barrel is smooth and unfurrowed.

The inside of the stock also, should not be oiled, for the reason already given; and, if the wood be swollen, it is impossible for the barrels to fit as they should do. However, I will say no more, but leave it to the griffin to find out by experience, the actual value he should place upon a really good fowling-piece, and when he knows what such a thing is, his

care of it will be in proportion to the estimation in which he holds it.

A true sportsman loves his gun as a part of himself, and very soon finds out how much it requires his utmost attention. In it consists his true delights; to it he looks for the pleasures of the field; with it he enjoys the happiness of indulging in his amusements; and, consequently, for it he ought to have, and naturally does have, the greatest regard and affection; such being the case, we will now take leave of the chapter, with the hopes that every young "*Nimrod*" will appreciate the remarks now made, and the advice now given, and take that care of his guns which their intrinsic value so much requires, and on which depends so many of his out-of-door amusements, in the land of the east.

CHAPTER III.

March down to Madras—Ruinous Expenses to Officers—A Break Down—Conjeveram Pagoda—And its Priests—The Sacred Monkeys—A Camp in a Swamp—The Miseries of a wet Tent—Outward Appearance of a Corps coming off a March a matter of secondary Consideration—Concluding Remarks.

IN the month of September, 1837, we received orders to march down to be stationed at the Presidency, a piece of intelligence we were anything but glad to have conveyed to us, as we all knew from experience what a disagreeable station we were going to in every respect. However, it was of no use grumbling about it—for "*The king commands, and we must obey;*" so we set to work with our usual dispatch (soldiers are always quick in getting ready for any thing, I mean British soldiers); packed up our traps, and were very soon on the road for our new destination.

I was sorry myself to quit Vellore again, because I had become so comfortably housed in very nice quarters, and had made up my mind to have a rest of at least a year before I marched again. I

had had enough of knocking about ever since I first joined my regiment; but so it is in India. A poor man no sooner gets himself settled, and begins to *feel* himself a little as it were after the shock upon his purse, which is never very full, when he is moved off again, and he becomes as badly off as ever.

Our friends at home fancy that we Indians are as rich as Croesus, and can command as much money as we like whenever we choose to shake the famous "*pagoda tree*," but those days are long gone by. All the money that was to be made is now in the coffers of the English at home, while those abroad are really and truly as poor as poverty can render them, and that is poor enough. The constant marching and counter-marching to which the poor regimental officers are subjected, tend to keep their pockets at a low ebb, the whole of their little savings must go to meet the expenses of some fresh journey, which comes upon them before they have barely got over the losses of the preceding one.

Really one would imagine that the people at head-quarters would make some arrangements to prevent the troops, both officers and men, being put to such sad inconveniences; instead of which it appears, that they do all they can to keep them in continual motion, thereby rendering them and their families liable to all the discomforts and priva-

tions that an empty purse can possibly purvey for them.

It is only those more fortunate in having staff situations, and who are consequently stationary, who enjoy the loaves and fishes of the service; and they alone are able to put by any money and derive the ultimate advantages of a long career of labour in the country.

Some of these men, indeed many of them, return to England rich enough to deserve the name given them of "*nabobs*;" whereas those who have not been so fortunate as their comrades are obliged to eke out a precarious existence upon nothing but their bare regimental pay and allowances, and, when they attain the superior rank of major or lieutenant-colonel, which alone enables them to put by a little money, they are old and worn out, and return to their native country broken down invalids, hypochondriacal and ill at ease with themselves, and every one about them; and, indeed, more fitted for their graves than the life of misery to which they are doomed.

The unsettled life of the regimental officers prevents them from saving money, so that they are obliged, *volens volens*, to stick to the service, and the higher grades of lieutenant-colonel are only made to quit it by their being knocked about from one station to another, so that body and mind grow weary of journeying to and fro, and the pocket becomes so

exhausted by the expenses that they are compelled to retire either by taking some bonus, or, if such does not offer, by taking their pensions to which from length of service they are entitled.

I may, perhaps, have overdrawn this picture, and made out our regimental officers to be worse off than they really are; at least, it may appear so, to others; but what I wish our friends at home to know is, that we are not so rich and so well off as we are supposed to be, and that we do not lead a life of ease and luxury so peculiarly oriental to the vivid imaginations of our countrymen, and to which we are such perfect strangers; when I say we, I mean regimental officers; the staff are well off enough in all conscience.

Care and economy are recommended, and acted up to by many, but what benefit does a poor wretch of a subaltern derive by either the one or the other? He pinches himself, living upon nothing, perhaps for a couple of years, to avoid the horrors of debt, and to put by a little money; but no sooner does that little begin to increase to a very little more, than the order comes for a long march, and away flies the poor-man's savings, which are absorbed in the expenses attending the move, and his means are as low as before, and this is the case with three-fourths of the army, and perhaps more.

It is really fearful and appalling to think how dreadfully involved the greater part of the officers

of the Indian armies are in pecuniary difficulties, merely from the circumstance of their frequent marching and counter-marching, where there is absolutely no necessity for transfer. The service is not a bit bettered by it, quite the contrary, as experience will prove, and I vouch for it, that if government were not to be moving troops about so much as they are doing now-a-days, if the reliefs were to take every five years instead of every two or three, they would not only benefit their own crippled resources, but place those of their poverty-stricken troops, (officers as well as men,) upon a better footing than they now stand.

I think if this change were effected that the revenues of the Agra Bank would not be in so flourishing a condition; they would not be yielding such very profitable dividends to the detriment and ruin of the vast numbers who from absolute want are under the necessity of applying to it for assistance at an enormous charge of interest, which only serves to add fuel to the fire of their desperate circumstances.

Such is the condition of almost all, (with few exceptions,) who are not so lucky as to have superior salaries; and they are stationed from year to year at one place, with no demands upon their large abstracts, save those of their own personal establishments; this is the condition, I say, of almost all from the lieutenant-colonel down to the

ensign: the former probably no sooner reaches one station, several hundred miles off, to take command of a regiment, than he is ordered away to another in an opposite direction, equally as far or perhaps further; thereby not only spending his little all, as before-mentioned, but forfeiting what he has worked so long and so arduously for, viz. the extra allowance for commanding the regiment.

Majors in command of corps, one or two captains, the adjutant, and the quarter-master, are the only individuals who remain at a station for any length of time; and these alone can put a little saving into the bag; that however goes for the next march, which very soon comes; and, as for the poor subalterns, they no sooner get to one place than they have to move to another, and no sooner there than they have to come back again; then there are the perpetual commands or detached duties, treasure-escorts, honorary escorts, taking charge of young officers, and other nonsensical duties, the expenses of which the individual sent on such have to defray; no wonder then that all the junior grades of the army are so much involved, and that too notwithstanding in many instances, the most rigid economy and strictest self-denial; some exceptions there are of people who manage well and make both ends meet, but those are few in number; however, take the whole as a body, they are the poorest set of professional men in the world.

We started on our march towards the Presidency without any particular occurrence worth noticing. We had the same trouble about one thing or another, the same poying of bills and getting rid of troublesome *duns* and such like abominations, at all times particularly objectionable to those who are what is called "*hard up*," but the more so on the eve of a march, when any demands upon the impoverished purse are looked upon as something fraught with all that is calculated to render a man's temper not in any one way approaching to that of an angel.

However we did get clear of Vellore, and reached the cantonment of Arcot, where we were received and entertained by the gallant cavalry regiment there stationed, with that true Indian hospitality so peculiar to the East, and on which I have already expatiated. We passed through a very flat uninteresting country; uninteresting in regard to appearance, but every inch of it rendered famous in the history of the wars of Hyder and Tippoo, and which had witnessed the march of thousands and thousands of the Moslem host, and the handful of our own gallant troops who so boldly contended against their numerous enemies.

As a matter of course, we could not be marching without some amusing occurrences; and our venerable commanding officer was the boy who frequently gave us many opportunities to indulge in

mirth at his expense. I must here mention, by the way, that he was a Scotchman, with the Edinburgh twang particularly broad in his dialect. He had, at times, a droll way of talking, and more so to the men, on duty matters. His attainments, as a linguist, were of a very low order, so that, when speaking in Hindustanee, or, rather, attempting to speak it, he would commit the most dreadful idiomatic blunders, which rendered his language perfectly incomprehensible to those addressed, and which would disturb the military gravity of both men and officers on every occasion.

Our gallant chief had his wife with him, and she was a constant source of anxiety and worry to him; for, poor creature, not being very strong, she was quite unfit to bear the fatigues of a camp life, or the troubles of marching. We had not proceeded far, early one morning, when the head of the column came in contact with a broken down palankeen, blocking up the narrow road, and the bearers standing round their late burthen, wrangling and quarrelling, as is usual for them to do on such and similar occasions. The doors of this fractured vehicle were closed, but it was immediately recognised as the one containing my commanding officer's lady.

As her A. D. C. I immediately went to the rear of the regiment, to another palankeen, in which lay sleeping, very comfortably, the worthy husband of

the unfortunate fair one, quite unconscious of what had befallen his beloved spouse. The old gentleman had not felt well that morning (as he had said), and consequently thought it advisable to dismount, and take the thing easily, by being carried instead of riding. He was sound asleep; however, there was no time to be lost; so I forthwith jumped off my horse, and, opening the doors, gave him a hearty shake, calling out at the same time, "Get up! Get up, Major! There is Mrs. —, in her palkee, lying in the middle of the road, with the front pole broken!"

"Why does not the advanced guard clear the way, man?" exclaimed the sleep-disturbed major; "make them clear the way this instant! Whose bandy, did ye say, was broken down, and stopping the road up? Have it turned off!"

"No, no! Major—get up quick!" cried I; "it is no bandy, I tell you, but your own wife's palankeen broken down, and cannot move on. There they are, with the pole clean off!"

"Who told you so? I don't believe ye!" exclaimed he. "Why, I had the poles made new on purpose, before we started, to avoid accidents! But where did ye say she was?"

"At the head of the column, where, if you had been, you would have seen her as well as the rest of us. Had you not better get out, and send your palkee to carry her on?"

“ Yes, of course, yes ! Make these bearers run on a-head, and call my horse ; where is that lazy loon of a horsekeeper ! ” vociferated the major. And with that he jumped out of his cozy retreat, night-cap on his cranium, and looking anything but amiable at being thus disturbed ; while I ran on a-head with the empty palkee, into which the poor lady was transferred, and conveyed to the next encampment, and the broken one taken back to Arcot in a bullock-bandy to be repaired. The major was not at all pleased at this mishap, and gave vent to his feelings in sundry growls and anathemas.

On our march, we passed through the town of Conjeveram, a place famous for its enormous pagoda, or hindoo temple, which has the celebrity of being of very ancient construction ; and to visit which, natives from all parts of India perform many a weary pilgrimage, to pay their devotions at the shrine, and to fulfil certain vows which they undertake from various causes, too numerous for me to enter into here ; however, annual feasts are held at the fauo, and many thousands, of all ages, and of both sexes, flock to it to celebrate them, attired in their holiday apparel, and laden with presents, each according to their circumstances, for the propitiation of the deity, whoever he may be.

This influx of human beings, and the presents they bring, enable the priests who officiate on the

occasion to collect an immense revenue, not only in coin, but in rich jewellery and clothing of every description. Where the money goes to I know not, and, therefore, cannot say; but if we may come to some conclusion, by our knowledge of the general craftiness of natives, we may safely say, that the priests are those who benefit thereby, and who enjoy the loaves and fishes, which they gather by their duplicity and cunning from the thousands who frequent the temple from time to time.

These priests must make a good thing of it, else they would not, I am certain, devote themselves so assiduously to the pleasant task of gulling their fellow-creatures in the way they do. They are a fraternity who benefit themselves at the expense of others, somewhat in the same way as certain houses of agency, who make rapid fortunes, and retire from business, and receive into their firm some other members, who follow in the footsteps of their predecessors with equal success. The Brahmins act exactly upon the same principle; they impose upon the ignorant public, collect all they can, and leave their places to be supplied by others equally interested, and who, in a very short space of time, amass large sums of money, sufficient, at all events, to enable them to quit, and live in all the luxury that wealth can command. The country swarms with these vagabonds, and it is surprising that the authorities have allowed them to rob the poorer

classes in the way they have done, and are doing, up to the present day.

Conjeveram pagoda swarms with a peculiar species of the monkey tribe, which are held sacred by the natives to the famous deity, Hunnamun, and the circumstance of any of them being wantonly injured is sure to be visited by condign punishment upon the heads of the offenders. Some years ago, a party of ignorant griffins, travelling through the place, contrived, unwittingly (but, at the same time, cruelly), to fire at and kill one of these creatures. They were instantly surrounded, and mobbed; and, had it not been for the timely presence of a detachment of soldiery then passing through, the probabilities were, that mischief would have been done, even to bloodshed. As it was, one or two got well drubbed, and the fowling-piece of the offender was broken to atoms, and thrown into the fire.

Young men first travelling in the East should be very particular how they play such tricks, by interfering with, or encroaching upon, the religious prejudices of the natives. There is nothing that they will not do for Europeans; but, at the same time, there is nothing they will resent so much as an insult offered to their families, customs, or religion. Many think it very fine and praiseworthy to deride the heathen, injure their temples or idols, and do everything in their power to aggravate the poor

natives; but it is very bad taste, and worse policy; nor do I think that any good can possibly result from it.

Were a set of heathens to enter one of our churches, and desecrate it, who would more readily resent the insult than ourselves? Besides, our doing such things is not the best way to show them our superiority, either in point of civilization, or as regards religion; decidedly not: to insult and maltreat is not the best way to win the heathen from the worship of "graven images, the work of men's hands, wood and stone."

This requires a very different line of conduct, diametrically opposite to that generally adopted; rather should we show ourselves to be Christians; and, unless we contrive a surer way of proving that we are so, we can never expect that the name of Christ, or his worship, can take the place of idolatry, which, alas, still exists to such a fearful extent in our Eastern possessions.

Idolatry and its blind votaries must and will reign paramount, until professing Christians set a better example by their lives and conversation, as well as their treatment of the natives among whom their lot in life is cast; and this certainly is not the case at present; and nothing but the grace of God, through the redeeming blood of our blessed Saviour, can make us better than we are; and that grace can never be imparted to us, unless we strive to obtain it by patient continuance in well-doing, and

by showing to our fellow-creatures, by precept and example, that ours is the only true worship, and that theirs is but the vain imagination of infatuated ignorance, aided by the wiles of the demon, who has, up to the age we live in, but too successfully imposed upon the minds of his victims, and made them believe that the worship of idols is the true religion, while that of the Christian is one of falsehood from beginning to end.

The heathen are strengthened in this idea, by witnessing the manner in which we demean ourselves among them; their intercourse with us gives them sufficient insight into our characters, and they look upon us as immoral, dissipated, depraved, and uncharitable; and, with such opinions in their heads, they come to the conclusion, that the religion of such a people can have no truth or solidity in it, and that their own is far preferable in every way, as having for its basis the very virtues which we ourselves profess, but never practise; but which they, ignorant and uneducated as they are, act up to in conformity with the dictates of their consciences, and the restrictions of their persuasion.

People say, that the natives of India, particularly those of our southern possessions, are everything that is bad; but let me ask, how have they become so, but through the example set before them by their conquerors? There can be no doubt about the matter, and the sooner a reform takes place the better will

it be for conquerors and conquered: immorality and vice will disappear; dissipation will be no more known, and the despised heathen will turn their eyes to the bright sunshine of reformation, acknowledge the superiority of Christianity over idolatry, and, relinquishing the vain and soul-destroying worship of graven images, they will adore the only true God, and wonder that they have so long and so uselessly preferred the imperfections of the one to the glorious prospects of salvation held out to them by the other.

Conjeveram is a civil station, having a collector's cutcherry, &c. &c. at it, as also a treasury, to guard which a detail is furnished either by the troops from Vellore, or from the veterans, according to circumstances. We held this post for several months, and it was on the occasion of one of their famous festivals that we lost a fine soldier when in attendance with a small party sent out on purpose to preserve order among the vast concourse of people there assembled. Fire-works in vast numbers were let off as usual, and an immensely large rocket instead of ascending as it ought to do, took a horizontal direction, and went right through the body of the unfortunate sepoy, who was standing at his post, and killed him on the spot.

This system of furnishing guards on occasions of festivities and processions, I do not at all approve of, for more reasons than one. It is converting

the troops into a kind of civil police, quite derogatory to the character of soldier, and inconsistent with their duties as such. The civil authorities have a strong force of peons (or policemen, properly, "belted-men," I believe), men well paid for their work, and, if well armed, these ought to be a sufficient check against all irregularities committed by country people who assemble on feast occasions, and who generally contrive to have a few squabbles, which are just as easily quelled by the civil power as by the military, who should not be called out except on emergent cases when anything serious is likely to take place, instead of which they are summoned at every petty village riot, or drunken brawl, and have all the drudgery, while those who are paid and maintained for these very purposes do nothing at all except get in the way when not required.

On arriving at the last stage but one from Madras, our commanding officer determined upon halting a couple of days previously to marching in, so that he might put everything into apple-pie order, to cut a fine figure on his entering the presidency. The place where we halted was, I think, at the village of Cunnatoor, and the encamping ground low and likely to be swampy in the event of rain. The major was all anxiety and bustle. The men's arms and accoutrements were burnished up, and a goodly quantum of pipe-clay administered to the

belts; knapsacks were repacked, pouches polished to the brightness of looking-glasses, or patent leather boots (those new fangled articles of wear which have put the matchless Warren's nose out of joint); turbans or chacos underwent a similar process; and all the dhobees in camp set to work to wash and iron all the men's havresacks; second-best coats were ordered to be worn; and the men actually told that they were to carry their *sandals* in their hands instead of on their feet, which were not to be encumbered with them until marching into Madras, for fear of their getting soiled, or dirtied!

The flank companies were to form the advance and rear guards. The band instruments, drums, &c. &c. were furbished up, and made to look as bright as brass and rubbing could render them. The baggage and followers were to start the previous evening (so that the poor sepoy's had little or nothing to eat that night), in order that the march of the regiment might not be obstructed in any way; in fact, everything was done that could be done, and I am sure, although I say it, I would never have wished to look upon a cleaner or better appointed regiment than was ours on this occasion.

I was myself worried beyond my patience during the whole of this memorable day, a day big with the fate of the major and his corps! If I went to

his tent *once*, on that day, I must have done so full twenty times; and as for those abominable notes, I am not far wrong when I say, that I received two or three every hour; and my mind was not at ease that night at ten o'clock, until the orderly came to my tent and imparted the important and comforting assurance in a whisper, that the "Major Sahib" was asleep!

Joyful intelligence, indeed, and on the reception of which I fancied ('twas but fancy) that I should have a little rest. But, alas! I was mistaken! Such was not the case! For, worn out and fatigued, I had slumbered sweetly for about a couple of hours, when I was roused by an orderly bearing another dreadful note! The reception of such a thing at so late an hour of the night would induce any one to imagine that the contents of it were of consequence, but it was not the case; for the major *merely* wrote to know how many files there would be on the ground in the morning, and also the names of the two officers warned to carry the colours! Perfectly preposterous I declare. How annoyed I felt!

I told the orderly I knew not what, and sent him away in a great rage. I found out afterwards that I had told the orderly to say there would be five hundred and fifty files and a half, and that the colours were to be carried by the drum and five majors! So much for the major's detestable note; he got

his answer, and I returned to my sleep. The most efficacious way of putting a stop to a multiplicity of notes is to send no answer, or to tell the orderly to say "not at home;" this way I adopted in self-defence, so that all notes arriving were left to stand for about three or four hours, and then I would reply to them all at once, thereby writing one to half a dozen.

But to proceed. I told the major during the evening that I feared all his arrangements and the trouble he had taken would be of no avail; for I thought it would rain before morning, and so it did, for shortly after midnight we had such a downpour that the tents were soon saturated, and the whole camp in a swamp. This, in the middle of the night too, was anything but comfortable or pleasant, particularly as we were to march into Madras the next morning. Many of the tents were blown down either from the force of the wind, or fell from the weight of the canvass. One of the officers had his right upon him, and had he not come and taken shelter with me, he would have fared badly.

The water was flowing through my tent upwards of a foot deep; my trunks and boxes I had taken the precaution of placing on the top of a table covered with a tarpaulin, so that nothing was spoilt, and by remaining on my cot I escaped getting wet. As for any communication outside, that could only take place by wading knee-deep through the water.

My friend and nightly guest came in dripping without a single dry thing to change; all his boxes having been left on the ground as usual, the contents of them had become useless for the time being, so that he was obliged to borrow from me; this we contrived very nicely, and we lay down on the same couch, feet to head as it were, not very comfortable, the reader will say, when I tell him that the said couch was only two feet wide!

The poor men suffered severely; almost all their tents came down; their muskets and nicely whitened accoutrements covered with mud and dirt; their knapsacks thoroughly drenched, and rendered three times as heavy in consequence; their pouches were all soaking, and the cartridges in them greatly damaged; in fact, all the preparations we had been making were knocked on the head. The anger and vexation of the major had no bounds, and he gave vent to his irate humour in volleys of curses and oaths quite sufficient to send all the elements out of their elements, were such a thing possible. The soldiery certainly looked more like drowned rats than anything else, presenting a most woful appearance, "when daylight did appear."

There was sufficient cause for vexation in this untoward circumstance, but I thought that my chief took it too much to heart, and wanted to make a show, which is never expected from troops

coming off a line of march. I do not think that the efficiency of a regiment should be judged of by the cleanliness of the men's accoutrements, or the neatness of their packs; certainly these are matters of consideration in the interior economy of a corps, but more of a secondary nature comparatively speaking.

My opinion of a regiment would be formed by observing the way in which the duty is carried on in the smallest details; for, if the men are smart and efficient in minor matters, it is a proof that those of more importance are not neglected; and the cleanly appearance of a body of men coming off a journey, is no criterion of their being effective, because a rabble may be well dressed and equipped, and yet be but a rabble still.

I must say that nothing is more unsoldierlike than an ill-dressed slovenly look, and nothing more soldierlike than a well-appointed cleanly appearance; but it is not dress that makes the soldier; he must know his duty, and, when that is ascertained to be the case, other items must be taken into consideration, and a knowledge of his duty will very soon teach him that cleanliness is not incompatible with smartness, and that both walk hand in hand together, never to be separated. To be a well-dressed soldier, I think he must be a smart one, for he takes a pride in his appearance, and he cannot be considered a smart soldier unless he tho-

roughly understands his duty and does it. I cannot bear to hear people say, when talking of any regiment, "It is a beautiful corps; a nice-looking body of men! So well dressed!" I always wait to see what they are made of, both officers and men, as regards a thorough knowledge of their duty; if they know that, well; if not, they are not worth a rush, in spite of all their fine dress and cleanly appearance. I remember one of our native infantry regiments being inspected, some years back, by a martinet of a general officer. The corps, as a corps, was one of those known as a "fine-looking" one. They had their clothing nicely (prettily, as the ladies would say) padded and fitted; their accoutrements were well put on, and everything, certainly, very dashing and dandified. Their officers were well dressed, with plenty of fanciful appendages to their uniforms. They had a capital band, and excellent mess. The men's packs fitted well, the pouches were faultless, and the turbans indubitably good; this was all very proper, but when they came to move and show the general the different items connected with their duty as soldiers, what a disappointment! They could do nothing; not even were they able to post or relieve a sentry in a proper manner.

The general was astonished, for he expected, it appeared, differently, from such a fine body of men. He went to the mess-house. There everything was

excellent, as far as the exterior was concerned. He examined the books and records. There they were beautifully bound in red morocco, and gilt edged, all very nice without doubt, and the general remarked, "Very pretty-looking drawing-room albums these seem, certainly; I wonder if the inside of them is as good as the outside."

I mention this one instance out of many, to prove the mistaken notion which some commanding officers indulge in, that the efficiency of a corps lies in the appearance—the outward appearance of their men, while they completely neglect the more important points which contribute so much towards their perfection. This *must* be a great error without doubt! I never yet knew a regiment which was looked upon as a well-dressed one worth its salt! If that great desideratum, good and attentive instruction in the duties of soldiers, is looked upon as of no importance, it stands to reason that a regiment will be worth nothing. None can be considered efficient which is not taught its duties, and no one can perform that duty without being thoroughly acquainted with every particle of its detail.

CHAPTER IV.

Arrival at Vepery in forlorn Condition—Disasters from a want of Accommodation—Vepery worse and worse, as a Locality for Troops—Cholera in the Camp—Misery and Unhealthiness of the Men's Lines—The Commander-in-Chief a strict Disciplinarian—A sham Fight in the Suburbs of Madras—Casualties of the Action—The Nabob's Body-guardman unhurt—Commanding Officer not fond of riding—The Navy and the Army—The Beer-drinker, with a few Remarks on the Subject of Drinking—The Cavalry Officer and the Arab Horse—The Madras Club.

WHEN our column of march came to be looked at by daylight, it presented a most distressing, ungainly sight. What the neat and gold-laced staff officer, who came out to show us the way, thought of us I cannot say, but our appearance was anything but what we wished, and our poor major was so much put out, and so irate, that I thought it would have broken his heart. The dirty, filthy, muddy, drenching state, in which all of us marched, was indeed anything but favourable to our good

name, and I longed for the time when we should all get under cover, so as to conceal the besmirched condition of our array from the eyes of those who invariably make it a point to criticise and find fault, for as we were always remarkable for being a clean corps, we felt absolutely ashamed to be seen.

Our route into Madras was anything but a good one. In some parts, the men had actually to wade above their knees in water, and the whole of the way it was ankle-deep in mud. The state in which we were, when we arrived at the outskirts, and the red dust with which we became covered, in moving through the streets, adding to our sorry plight, made matters worse than before, and, I must confess, that I never recollected having seen troops in such a condition in all my life, and I hope I never shall again. When arrived at the barracks, we found that the regiment which we had come to relieve had not vacated their lines, and that the usual committee for the valuation of the huts had not even assembled; that in fact nothing was ready for our reception.

Such a state of things was most annoying; to the men particularly, who were, in consequence, obliged to locate themselves, and their host of families, on the small confined space near at hand, which happened to be in a dirty swampy condition, not fit for the Vepery pigs to wallow in, far less for

troops to encamp upon. This piece of ground was about 150 yards long, and 50 broad. There were no tents for the men, that is, not for them all, so that many with their families were huddled together in those miserable little pals already described, while many took shelter in the verandahs of the several buildings close by.

We were put on duty almost immediately we arrived, thereby allowing the men no time to make themselves tidy or clean, after the filthy condition to which they had been reduced; and, in addition to this, their families were unable to carry their food to them, from the impossibility of leaving their property to be stolen by the many thieves who were prowling about in all directions; as it was, several robberies were committed, and many a poor man lost his little all; whereas, had they been all housed on their first arrival, nothing of the kind would have occurred. The men were thus starved while on duty, their families were daily robbed, they had nowhere to sleep, except in the wretched accommodation of their own tents, or pals upon wet ground, and with little or no covering over them.

Under these very trying circumstances, it was not at all to be wondered at that the cholera very soon made its appearance, and carried off the followers by scores, creating quite a panic throughout the regiment. We had many cases among the

men, of whom we lost altogether about twenty, as well as I can remember. The first to go were two poor mad-men belonging to our corps. In addition, we lost one of the finest young officers in the regiment, our grenadier subaltern. His death was matter of regret to us all, for he was much liked, and gave promise of being a smart and intelligent officer. He was taken ill at about twelve o'clock at noon, and was in his grave before the sun was set the following day. I was surprised that more of us were not attacked, our quarters being close to the scene of death, and the continual noise of native music and beating of tom-toms, together with the howling of women and screeching of children, added not a little to the probabilities of our being affected.

The medical men were indefatigable in their exertions, and many cases taken in time were successfully treated. The officers had no easy task to perform, their men were continually coming to them for brandy, and calling to them to help them and their perishing families. Cholera in a regiment is in truth a dreadful calamity. No one can conceive the pitiable state to which it reduces the men, who, from being brave soldiers, are reduced to the verge of despair, and demean themselves like little children; men who would shrink from nothing in the performance of their duty, become unnerved, panic-stricken, and quite unmanageable.

I myself witnessed several very distressing cases, which affected me deeply. It was a truly heart-rending sight to see men, women and children of all ages dying promiscuously, without being able to relieve their sufferings or to check the progress of disease and death. But the families of our soldiery are themselves very culpable; for, it is a well known fact, that if taken in time, the disease is very often overcome without difficulty; the men, however, from foolish prejudices, perfectly at variance with common sense, will not allow their females to be seen; besides that, they have a particular dislike to the active treatment practised by our faculty; their own remedies fail where our's would have been successful, and the consequences are, they die like rotten sheep.

On the occasion I allude to, our medical men were ever ready to take the cases in, but few were brought to them, and those in an advanced stage of the disease. Were they cured or not? No, they were not—they all died! Every fighting man was, as a matter of course, taken to hospital. The non-commissioned officers were held responsible, so that they were constrained to be ever on the alert to detect fresh cases. The men we lost were mostly weak and sickly; some were cases neglected by their own folly, after the symptoms of the disease had been overcome.

I remember a particular instance, which I will here

mention, by way of showing what the poor natives will do through their ignorance and obstinacy. One of our officers made up a mixture, after a recipe which many of my readers will recollect as having some years ago been published in the public papers, and which had been successfully used by an officer of our service in curing patients of the cholera. It was a conglomeration of brandy, laudanum, cayenne pepper and other condiments, all jumbled together, a drop of which was sufficient to set a poor man's inside on fire. With this mixture our worthy friend was very fortunate, as he cured several of our people who came to him in preference to going to the doctor.

But the case I particularly wish to mention was that of a boy of about eight years old, the son or nephew, I forget which, of one of our camp colourmen. The child was attacked after a copious meal off parched grain and greens fried in oil; and instead of going to the hospital was taken by his relative to the *quack*, who held his sanctum in a room in the mess-house.

A dose of the mixture was duly administered, and the old man desired to take the boy home and keep him warm in bed; being careful that he was not disturbed from his sleep, which in all probability would come upon him from the effects of the laudanum. He was also told, that when the patient awoke thirsty, he was to have nothing but

warm broth, made of mutton or chicken well seasoned with pepper, and if symptoms of the disease still continued he was to be brought again.

The child was taken away; the cholera was checked, the patient fell asleep, and when he awoke, complained of thirst. The father would not (or perhaps could not) supply the broth, instead of which he gave him a large dishfull of cold rice and water, in a state of acidity from having been kept two days. As a matter of course, cholera returned, the boy was again attacked, was again taken to the officer aforesaid, and the dose was again repeated; but this time the stupid blockhead of a father was kicked out, and his son kept in the house, under the eye of his medical adviser. Every care was taken of the lad, and the following morning he was recovered, though so much affected by the powerful remedy, that it was a long time before he was quite well. Had it not been for the kindness and unremitting attention of his benefactor, the lad would have fallen a sacrifice to his father's blinded ignorance; but it fortunately happened otherwise, and he escaped. What a sad thing it is that such calamities should befall these poor people, when they might be avoided by a little prudent care and good management!

Had the march of our regiment been delayed for a fortnight or three weeks, we might have arrived at Madras after the corps which we had to

relieve had quitted the Presidency, so that we might at once have taken up our lines without the necessity of the families encamping on the dirty piece of swamp, where they were obliged to locate themselves. This might very easily have been avoided had a little forethought been exercised; but so it was, and where the oversight (or whatever it may be termed) could be traced to, it is out of my power to state, but that such did exist, and does exist to the present day, there cannot be a doubt; the comforts of the native troops are matters of little importance it would appear.

I had been stationed at Vepery before, when I first came out; but then I was an ignorant doing-duty ensign, and consequently knew not half, or, I should say, nothing of the objections to such a place as a station for troops. "Where ignorance is bliss, &c. &c." and further than the knowledge of everything abominable on the face of the earth, I did not then think that it was a worse station than any other; but, when I came to it again three years after, I was able to form an opinion very different certainly to what I had before entertained, and as the adjutant of my regiment, I could not help seeing disadvantages innumerable; and this makes me the more convinced in mine own mind that a worse place could not possibly have been selected as a station.

My daily intercourse with the men enabled me

to notice the inconveniences to which they were subjected with regard to the expenses of livelihood, as well as those of maintaining themselves properly in clothing and other requisites. The great distance to which most of them had to go on duty, which was severe, was very trying, particularly in the hot dry weather. Every time they were on guard, they had to mount in full-dress, which was invariably much injured by the red dust to which they were exposed. It is indeed ruination to a regiment to be located at Madras. Those of the line should not be kept there, if better stations are available.

Government should embody local corps for the purpose of carrying on the duty. Two or three militia-regiments, for instance, would be just the thing, and answer admirably, (like those at Calcutta); a strong body of police would serve to protect public buildings, while the militia could furnish details for the fort, and do orderly duty. This may appear objectionable, but if people would take into consideration the injury done to the discipline and interior economy of a regular regiment in having them at a place like Madras, my proposition would not appear so.

I think my military readers will agree with me respecting the drawbacks I have pointed out, and the feasibility of militia and police being substituted for the regulars. I have, I think, shown the harm

that is done to the service by the present system; the arrangements proposed, and the benefit to be derived therefrom, would show themselves in a very short space of time. Not a regiment of infantry goes down to Madras but what suffers; and I vouch for it, that not a single officer nor soldier who has been once stationed there, would ever wish to go there a second time.

After the cholera had subsided, as a matter of course our first thoughts were how to render our men's lines as free from filth and dirt as we could. They were in a shameful state when we took possession, and we had a difficult task in clearing them and making them habitable. The disease left us about a week or ten days after it first made its appearance, and those who had been attacked and escaped, recovered very soon and returned to their duty; but we were fearful, from the dirty condition of the lines, that we should again be visited by that dreadful scourge.

The men underwent much personal expense in rebuilding and re-thatching their huts, and this alone involved them in a way which they could ill afford. Anybody visiting Vepery, and looking at the wretched assemblage of huts and hovels, the dirty burying-ground in a swampy state, the receptacle not only of the dead but of filth of every description, the several stagnant ponds, or rather ditches, teeming with slime and dead dogs and cats, the

swarms of pigs and the heaps of rubbish in all directions; and, above all, the stench sufficient to breed a plague, would, I am sure, coincide with me in the opinion, that there could not be a worse place for troops. Things may have improved, and there was plenty of room for improvement; but when we occupied that delightful spot, the only thing that could possibly be said in its favour was, that there could not be a place to equal it in disadvantages.

I will not encroach any more upon the patience of my reader by dwelling on this subject; I can only express a hope that ere this present period some improvements have really been made, and that the comforts of the two infantry corps stationed at the Presidency are a little more attended to than they were ten years ago.

Why should not poor Jack Sepoy's health be consulted as well as that of the European soldiers? Why should his comforts be made subject of secondary consideration? And why should he be looked upon with indifference? Why should not government lay out a few thousand rupees in erecting proper places for the native troops to reside in with their families, instead of making them dwell in such wretched abodes, really not fit for pigs?

Some lines are exceptions to the generality, but they are made so from private resources, from the impoverished and scanty pockets of the men. The

allowance granted to native troops for hutting themselves is small enough ; why should not lines be erected by government, and the troops occupying them made to keep them in repair ? It would be a saving in the end every way, depend on it. I say that some lines are exceptions to the generality, but I do not think I am very far wrong in adding, that those are so few, that the whole may be taken together as unfit for people bearing the name of soldiers to live in.

Our commander in chief, Sir P. M——, was a great stickler for all the minutiae of dress and other little observances, which were a source of much annoyance to the officers at the Presidency. Several long orders were issued respecting what officers should put on before eight o'clock in the morning, what after that hour, and what during their evening rides, or drives. Swords and belts were in great vogue ; a man could not stir out of his house without having both fastened to his side, the general himself sitting down to his meals with a huge sabre hugged between his knees. If a button was open, a poor man was sure to be found fault with ; and, if the chin strap of the cap was not down, buckled under his chin, he was equally culpable.

Officers' whiskers were made to be clipped in a certain way, from the tip of the ear to the corner of the mouth in a straight line, with hedge-like preci-

sion, not one hair above nor one below ; the incongruity in appearance was thus worse than before ; some had a good show, while others sported only a small tuft, and others, again, only a half dozen hairs on either side. The hair, too, was ordered to be kept close cut, and, I do believe, if it could have been possible, the teeth would have been put under military restrictions of some kind or another.

There were several other paltry little nonsensical rules equally absurd, and which created much ridicule and discussion. However, it may be wrong in me to say so, though I trust that what I have said, may not give offence to, or be considered improper by, those now in office. We have all our failings, and why should commanders in chief be exempt from the common lot of human creatures ? They cannot all be perfection.

This selfsame gallant chief was particularly fond of exercising the troops in large bodies at sham fights ; a capital thing, too, the very best that he could do ; so that, notwithstanding the folly of all his other peculiar hobbies, this one of his was decidedly the best ; and I do wish that such things were practised a little more throughout the army than they are ; the benefit that would accrue therefrom speaks for itself, and needs no comment from me in this place.

We were out on several occasions, and had plenty of it, more than was pleasant in the hot

sultry weather so peculiar to Madras. The first time I have reason to recollect very well, as it was attended with some ludicrous occurrences, the which I think I cannot do better than record for the amusement, I trust, of the reader.

The scene of action was situated in one of the principal parts of Madras. There was a river (such as it was), a bridge or two to cross, high roads, hedges, ditches, houses and huts; but not one yard of ground to enable troops to manœuvre upon. The whole force consisted of about 4000 men of all arms, divided into two portions, opposed to each other. Cavalry rushed upon infantry squares; then infantry charged through rivers and took the cavalry in flank, when they thought it time to be off, so off they went in a great hurry. Then the banks of the river were lined with skirmishers opposed to each other; and there was such a fire kept up on both sides, that had there been bullets, the whole would have been annihilated in no time. Then one party was supposed to have been beaten by the other, and the one retreated in good order while the other followed in ardent pursuit; and there were such popping of musquetry, roaring of cannon, such drumming and bugling, such dust and such beat, such bawling and squalling, that it appears to me the whole was a scene of confusion worse confounded, and I thought that if there was so much of banging and

such a host of mistakes in a *sham* fight, what a precious business must a *real* one be!

The commander-in-chief gave one order, and his staff gave another; and commandants of regiments gave a third, so that there was really no knowing what to do. I saw one company of infantry dash up to their middles in water to charge the enemy's flank. It was one of ours, and they did not hold up their pouches, which got filled with the element. The commander-in-chief, who ordered the movement, saw this, and directed me (I was close to him at the time) to go and tell the men to mind their ammunition.

It was too late, had there been any necessity for their doing so; but all the cartridges had been expended, and the pouches had nothing in them (except the water), of which the fellows were well aware. "The ammunition is all expended, your excellency," replied I, saluting him; "and the men know that; but if you will look a little closely you will observe that those who have any are careful of it."

"How do you know that the ammunition is expended?" inquired our chief.

"Merely from the circumstance of my having seen them fire away all that had been served out!" replied I. "The quantity expended during the last file firing and skirmishing must have been from eighteen to twenty pounds; and your ex-

cellency is aware that there was much firing at the commencement of the action; besides, soldiers are much too jealous of their ammunition to be so forgetful as to allow it to be damaged when wading through water; those who have empty pouches are the only ones who have allowed the water to get into them."

"I have no doubt of that," answered his excellency, "and I do see some of the men holding their pouches out of water; but I had no idea that the last fire expended so many cartridges—your men must have fired very briskly?"

"They have always been taught to use smartness with precision in their firing, your excellency," replied I; "a sharp fire can give the enemy no time to think."

"A just remark, young sir," exclaimed he, "a very just remark. Now, where's your commanding officer, go and call him here."

This I did, and left him with the general, who expressed himself very much satisfied with all that had been done.

There were several casualties in this action. Some of the troopers were unhorsed in charging the squares; two or three men popped into deep holes in crossing the river, and sank as if to rise no more; and, when they did get out, made a very sorry figure, covered as they were with mud, and looking like drowned rats. I myself, in taking a

leap over some palings, charged up against a gentleman in plain clothes, who turned out to be the governor (I had not seen his lordship before, and that certainly was a novel mode of introduction), to whom I apologized for my apparent want of deference to so high a personage as his lordship. He seemed never to have forgotten the circumstance, for whenever I met him he always alluded to it.

Again, in carrying an order at full gallop, I had to turn a sharp angle of an extensive wall, in doing which I came headlong against one of the nabob's body guards-men (a nondescript animal elsewhere alluded to), and such was the suddenness of the rencontre, that the horse and horseman were both upset, and, had it not been for the activity of my little arab, it was more than probable that I, too, should have had a fall; as it was, I escaped with a knock of my nasal organ against his head as he reared, and which drew a little of the superfluous blood that flowed in my veins. The trooper gave vent to his feelings by a volley of anathemas in Hindustanee as he cleared himself from his prostrate steed, while I rode off on my errand as fast as I could, wondering that I had been so much more fortunate than he in keeping my saddle, being anything but what is called a good rider.

But our poor major was the individual who suffered most on this, as well as on other occasions,

and, as the one now alluded to, was the first affair of the sort he had been engaged in, perhaps since his first entry into the service, there appeared to him to be a novelty in the business, and a degree of excitement and exertion of mind, as well as of body, attending it, altogether unsuited to one of his quiet habits, and which put him to sad inconvenience, such as he had never undergone before in all his life.

I must, however, here be permitted to state, that a day or two previously to our going out to this self-same famous sham-fight, the commander-in-chief had (with the permission of his lordship, the governor—no troops at Madras can be moved out, except by his sanction, previously asked and obtained, because the whole are under his command, as Governor of Fort St. George,) directed that officers commanding regiments, with their flank-company captains and adjutants, should meet him at a certain rendezvous, at a certain hour, on a certain morning.

The meeting accordingly took place, and his excellency (a fine, active old fellow) galloped over a great deal of ground, followed by about twenty or thirty officers, all mounted. He went at a smart pace, and that caused much emulation among the train that followed, to keep up with their leader—horses jumped about, reared and plunged, and their

riders held on famously, as if a staff-appointment depended on their keeping their seats.

To this mode of proceeding, and the speed at which the whole cavalcade dashed along, neither our worthy commander nor his charger had been accustomed. The latter, never having been out of a walk for a considerable period, thought, doubtless, that it was capital fun, and nearly ran away; and the former was in such a state of mental agony, and lost so much leather, that, when he reached home, he was in a sad plight, and kept his room for the whole day; but this did not end on that day, for there was a repetition that same evening, and twice the following day.

The exertions which he had undergone, added to those of the fight, quite upset our commandant. He was confined to his bed for a whole week, with physic and "*simple dressing*," and did nothing but give way to bitter invectives against new-fangled commanders-in-chief, who introduced a system to which he had never been subjected before, and declaring that it was time enough to fight when there was real necessity for it; and, as for galloping through the streets like a madman, it was preposterous, and the whole party ought to have been stopped by the police, instead of their being permitted to frighten all the foot passengers who crowded the place.

But it was quite laughable to see him on the

second and third day after he had thus lost leather. The pain and inconvenience must certainly have been great, for he was each time obliged to go home in his palankeen, but the strange, droll way in which he grumbled at, and inveighed against, the commander-in-chief, was what amused us so much, and one could not help laughing, to witness the miserable condition to which he had been reduced. It was a long time before he recovered, and, whenever sham-fights were talked of afterwards, he would beg that the subject might not be mentioned; a very good reason why, for it must have been a sore one to him, in every respect.

The only drawback (the heat not included—and that is always one in India to everything) to our doings on these occasions, was the enormous number of spectators who congregated to see the spectacle. They quite clogged up the way, and there was no moving on account of them. Our space was small enough without them, and their presence cramped us in our movements. Nothing could be done with steadiness, or precision; the noise and yelling they made rendered it an impossibility to hear the different words of command, and when they are not understood, troops cannot act correctly. There was no stopping the noise either, so that all we did was by guess-work, and precious work that was, too!

At one time, we had to cover the retreat of our

force in crossing a river over a bridge. We had, as usual, our line of skirmishers thrown out along the bank, and when the rest of the battalion crossed the bridge, the crowd got in among the men, and completely blocked up the passage; the sepoy became very much annoyed at this, and there were such kicking, pushing, and vociferating that, had it not been for the presence of the officers, something serious would have happened. As it was, several jumped over the parapets into the water; some were trampled upon, and nearly killed, and such was the confusion that the mass of human beings was carried along over the causeway, with so great a velocity and with such a noise, that it was absolutely impossible to check its progress, until we were clear of the bridge, and once more on the big road. I never witnessed such a scene in all my life.

It is a great pity that the mob should be allowed to interfere with the troops; for all the good that should be done in such exercise, is rendered null and void, by the noise and hubbub caused by their presence; the attention of the men is taken off from what they are about; they know not what they are doing, or why; and they go home to their barracks, after much exertion and fatigue, as wise as they came. The quantity of ammunition fired away becomes absolute waste; and the bawling and squalling of commandants, (until they are hoarse,)

the gallopping about of mounted officers, the puffing away of hughers, the ruh-dubb-dubbing of the drummers, go for nothing ; and all the troops would have been much better in their quarters, with their arms and accoutrements resting clean in their racks, instead of undergoing wear and tear, and being dirtied to no purpose.

Sham-fights are useful things, no doubt. But I think they ought to be conducted away from the presence of an idle mob of spectators. Troops should be moved out into the country, on ground purposely selected for practice, and affording the means of attack and defence. They should be encamped for a series of days, and an uninterrupted campaign, embracing a variety of manœuvres, of all branches of the service, gone through ; which would enable the officers and men to gain some idea of what would be required of them in real services, against a real enemy.

There should be no gaping multitude, to impede the soldiery ; there should be no noise of congregated thousands, howling and yelling to each other. Everything for instruction and for practice should be done with order and precision ; every officer and man should be made to understand what is required of him, both individually and collectively. Orders should be clearly and distinctly given, and conveyed ; and all should be done by that grand rule to every military movement—

steadiness ; which alone can benefit the soldiery, and without which all the drill and exercise in the world would be of no avail.

But I shall have occasion to record another of these sham-fights on a more extensive scale, which took place some time after the above ; so will say no more on the subject at present, trusting that many of my readers will derive information and instruction from my description of our proceedings, as also from any remarks, which I may think it necessary to make upon them ; none are, or have been, made with ill-feelings, or from invidious motives. My sole object, from the commencement, has been already made known to my readers ; no one must, therefore, attribute uncharitable intentions to anything that I may say.

Being stationed at Madras, we had many opportunities of becoming acquainted with the officers of the different ships of war which frequented the roads from time to time, and they were constantly our guests at mess. We saw much of them both on shore and on board their own ships, and many a pleasant day and jovial evening I have spent in the society of those truly noble fellows. While we were with them, they would do everything in their power to show their hospitality, and well did they succeed too, for I would never wish to partake of better cheer than what they used to give us.

The admiral's ship, W——, happened to come

in while we were there. Of course being strangers, we sent them cards of invitation on board, and entertained the whole of the ward-room, as well as the gun-room officers, at mess; this was not once, but several times, and rare fun did we have on such occasions. The W——'s were a very gentlemanly set of fellows indeed, so that we never regretted having made their acquaintance; the only cause for sorrow was our parting from them, and many is the time that I have looked back to the very happy days we have had with them. I think I am not wrong when I add that our worthy friends had equally as good an opinion of, and as kindly feelings towards us, as we had for them.

The blue-coats and red should, and always do, move hand in hand wherever they go. There cannot possibly be two nobler professions. Hurrah for the wooden walls of old England, and the gallant hearts of oak which guard them; and hurrah for the red-coats, too, who fight shoulder to shoulder with them by sea as well as by land!

We of the —th are certainly very much attached to the navy, and I trust we shall always be so too. The men used to take up the same feeling, and frequently went on board the "*lūrrace jhas*" (fighting-ship), to see the sights, and talk with the "*sailor logue*," as the sepoy calls our gallant tars, and it was highly amusing to see the latter with the former, cracking their jokes and trying to make

them drink grog and taste a bit of salt junk; and, when the ship's crew were at quarters, and went through their evolutions, working their guns, handling their sails, and doing everything with that peculiar smartness for which the British Navy is so famous, our lads would stand on the poop in silent admiration and wonder. Can there be a more beautiful heart-stirring sight than that of a man of war's crew at work, either at the daily routine of exercise, or in real action?

As I stated, we were frequently guests on board the W——, which was for a considerable period the only ship of war in the roads. They had other visitors on board, of course, as well as ourselves, and that every day: it may, therefore, be easily supposed that the entertaining so much company must have been very expensive, particularly to the junior grades. Under such circumstances, it was as well to avoid putting their hospitality too often to the test; but some people never think of the expense which they put others to, as long as they themselves have not to pay the piper. This was exemplified in one individual, whom I remember seeing every time I visited the W——. He was decidedly a standing-dish either at the ward-room or at the gun-room mess-table; and almost lived on board. He had come down to Madras on sick certificate leave, and was consequently supposed to

be little able to partake of, or indulge in the good things of life.

This personage was a great connoisseur in beer, which he would drink to such an extent, that I am really afraid to say how many bottles he would swallow at one sitting, but I think I may safely put him down to six; yea, verily, and more than that, too! I was told by one of our navy friends that he came off to the ship every day, and each time demolished a similar quantity, quitting the ship in a state not so sober as people like to see going down the gangway of a line-of-battle ship.

It was quite a wonderful and a curious sight to watch the manner in which this poor man drank his beer. I often looked at him, to try and ascertain how he contrived it, but he would swallow a large tumblerfull at one great gulp! No sooner was the glass to his lips than the contents disappeared in a trice! I tried to do the same one day, by way of experiment, and only succeeded in half choking myself. The pleasure of partaking of any nice beverage, consists in the tasting it; but this man declared that the delight he experienced was in being able to pour down his throat as much as would deluge any reasonable person in a short space of time; but it appeared that the more he drank the more he wanted; he had a raging thirst, which could never be satiated.

The officers of the flag-ship very soon became weary of this every-day occurrence. Had the man been an agreeable companion, clever, well-informed, or in any way amusing, they might probably have been induced to overlook this propensity; but he had not one redeeming quality in him, not one feature of character to hide his failing, so that he soon became a perfect nuisance, the more particularly as he invariably invited himself, and nothing could keep him away; hints were unavailing; he had thousands if he would have taken them, both on shore and afloat; not because people grudged him his meat and drink, but because of his disgusting habits of getting tipsy every day; a sight at all times an unpleasant one to gentlemen, but rendered still more so from daily repetition.

This miserable man was not satisfied with swallowing almost a dozen quarts of beer before and at his tiffin, but he would contrive to get invited to one of the messes in the evening, when he would demolish a similar quantity, qualified with other mixtures, and get, or be carried, to his bed as drunk as a fiddler! This was a man said to be sick; it was a sickness certainly, but one of a very peculiar nature, such as did not require the medicine of the doctor to overcome; it was the mad and maddening rage for drink, which hurries so many a fellow-creature to his last home; 'tis the thirst which, in nine cases out of ten, only stops with the

delirious brain, the madman's frenzy, the bed of sickness incurable, and the last of all events—death!

But this daily intruder on board the seventy-four did not continue his visits for any length of time. He one day got boozy, and the admiral happening to be on the quarter-deck, when he tumbled up the ladder, he was seen, and got a hint to quit the ship, such as he could not well help taking, much to the delight of all the officers, particularly the junior ones, whom he used to pump upon most fearfully. But I must continue to make mention of this hero, in order that I may bring his career to its close, to show how it terminated, and hold his fate forth as a warning to others.

At Madras, I had purchased a very fine young Arah horse for a charger. He was a beautiful dashing creature, and one day while I was riding him on the evening promenade, the beer-drinker caught sight of him, and admired him much. He said that he thought the animal would make him a capital parade-horse, (he was in the cavalry,) and offered to become a purchaser if I wished to part with him. I told him that I had but recently bought him myself; but, as I did not think him steady enough for me, being an infantry adjutant, and an indifferent rider (they say all infantry adjutants are bad riders—I do not agree with the remark, because I have seen some first-rate horse-

men among them,) I would not mind entering into an arrangement, provided *he* made it worth my while to part with him.

He offered me a couple of hundred rupees in addition to what I had given for him, and I agreed, provided again, that he liked him after a fair trial; for, to say the truth, I did not think that the two would long agree. He asked me to dismount, and allow him to try him up and down the course. I jumped off the horse, and he mounted with considerable difficulty, nearly tumbling over the other side. He set spurs into the horse's flanks, and although his rider was a very heavy man, (being fat and bloated from good living and beer-drinking,) the animal made no difficulty in galloping off with him as hard as he could go. I saw at once that it was a regular runaway, the rider had no power over the horse, and in turning a corner over a bridge was thrown with violence against the parapet, and conveyed home in a state of insensibility.

The horse meanwhile, finding himself with nothing but his saddle on his back, kicked up his hind legs half a dozen times, snorted and scampered off to his own stables. My servants seeing him coming home minus his rider imagined broken bones and fractured skulls, and came running down the road to pick up their master. But the poor cavalry officer had had enough. He said not a

word more about the Arab, but quitted the Presidency shortly after for the up-country. I do not exactly know what became of him, but I think he went into the invalids, and died shortly after of apoplexy or delirium tremens, one or other, the dreadful effects of drink.

I may as well here relate another instance of the fatality attending a too liberal indulgence in the pleasures of the bottle in India. We will not allude to that brutal propensity to drinking brandy and water all day, to which some, alas ! are too unhappily addicted ; nor will we say anything to the baneful effects of constantly toping at sherry and water ; but we will confine ourselves to that common and vulgar beverage, called beer, known in India by the names of their respective brewers " Hodgson," " Bass," " Allsop," and so on.

I have already mentioned one fatal instance of beer-drenching. I will just cite one more, (I could a hundred,) to show how an indulgence to too great an extent, in what is given for our nourishment, is turned into an abuse, to the ruin of health and to the loss of life. Beer will kill as well as brandy, and what a disgusting object is a man who gets drunk upon beer.

I happened to know a medical man once upon a time, who though a very good kind of fellow in his way, very clever in his profession, and an agreeable boon companion, was nevertheless much

addicted to smoking and drinking. Gin and water was his general evening beverage; with that he would finish by way of a night-cap over the rest; but beer was his "*tippie*" during the day. He would either be tasting it at the mess-house, or he would be swallowing it by buckets-full at tiffin; then again he would partake of it at dinner, and again at supper.

This lasted for a number of years. He was a hale and strong stalworth man. Nothing seemed to hurt him. His constitution appeared unimpaired; so though years went on, he made no alteration in his mode of living, and, instead of being cautious as he grew older, became more irregular than before. He could carry an enormous quantity of "*malt*," so that I cannot say I ever saw him in a state of intoxication; as far as that was concerned, his drinking did not do him much harm, and the beer continued to be demolished uninterruptedly for a long period, increasing however in quantity every year.

But time works wonders in a man, steady or otherwise. The fatal effects of drink began to tell upon him, and he was in a short week brought to the verge of the grave by a severe attack of liver complaint. This he got over, and he went on as before. He had a second attack; this also was conquered, and he still drank beer as much as ever;

there was no withstanding it; he could not tear himself from the darling of his soul.

He married, and had two children; that made no alteration, beer was his delight, and he drank it as hitherto. He had a third attack of liver, and so severe that it alarmed him, and he made a bet that he would not touch a drop of beer or smoke a cheroot for a certain number of days, by which time he hoped to have got over the desire he had for both. He recovered from his third illness, and subsequently won his bet.

The day after he gave a large tiffin-party, and took I know not how many bottles; and very soon became as bad, if not worse, than before. He had a fourth attack of liver, and, after lingering in a sad state for upwards of three months, died a miserable object, with nothing to cause his death but the dreadful rage of drinking that selfsame draught, which is indeed the ruin and destruction both of body and soul of so many beings.

Who has visited Madras and not seen that beautiful establishment the club? Every Madrassee is familiar with it, as if it were his own home, and what a delightful place it is to go to at all times! It is the nearest thing to England in the place, all but the sable-visaged domestics about it. I never wish to see anything more elegant or *récherché* than the arrangements of this establishment. Neither

Calcutta nor Bombay can boast of one at all approaching the club at Madras, and every one will allow it to be second to none in the East.

The beautiful drawing-room, or I should call it the reading-room, so elegantly and so tastefully furnished, with reading and writing tables, sofas, and so forth. The newspapers, from all parts of the world, the periodicals and newest publications placed and arranged on the tables. The ceilings ornamented with immense large rich cut glass chandeliers, and punkahs. Then, the comfortable and well arranged suites of apartments for taking meals in, and the beautiful wing of sleeping-rooms on one side, with the billiard-rooms on the other; the famous racket-court, where that truly manly exercise is kept up from morning to nightfall; all these arrangements are on a superb and liberal scale; the eating and drinking are first-rate; the attendance is good, and every thing clean and neat and as private as can possibly be.

This club is an excellent thing for travellers visiting the Presidency from up-country stations, but it is daily frequented by the military and civilians of the place, as well as by the officers of the royal navy, who are now, I believe, admitted as honorary members, on being regularly introduced by a subscriber; but, I think, these are only as far as "*mates*;" the "*midship-wites*" are not admitted, and have not been since a whole party of them

were one day found mounted on the *punkahs*, and exhibiting their expertness in riding them in the same way that sailors do when reefing topsails.

The members of the law, and merchants are, by *sufferance*, admitted as regular members of the establishment, though the club was originally intended as an accommodation to the military and civil service; still others have since crept in, and the subscription is large in consequence. Everything in the club is conducted in the most economical manner, so that any person can live there as quietly and as cheaply as he wishes. The stranger and the invalid find a ready and comfortable home, with every requisite of the very best description.

Married subscribers, with their wives and families, are not allowed any accommodation, nor are they suffered to obtain supplies, for their own use, from the stores of the institution. This last, I think, a very bad rule, and very unaccommodating; for a married subscriber pays his money, as well as the bachelor; he is a stranger to the place, he has no home, and yet he derives no benefit; no comfort, nothing from it, unless he goes there himself, and, then, what is to become of his family? I think that a portion of the premises should be appropriated to buildings for the accommodation of married subscribers and their families; and I hope the day is not far distant when such will be the case. At present, the club is decidedly of no advantage to

them, for they have to pay and derive no benefit from their subscriptions.

Any person wishing to become a member of this splendid institution, must, in the first instance, be regularly introduced by one member, and seconded by two; his name is then exposed in the public reading-room, for a certain period, until the balloting takes place, after which the secretary informs the candidate whether or not he has been admitted to the benefits of the establishment. The regulations are sent to him, and he is politely informed that he must pay his donation, so much, and monthly subscription, so much; very trifling indeed, considering the comforts, &c. accruing from belonging to the club. The former can either be paid at once, or by instalments, within a certain period.

I think it advisable that all arrivals at Madras should become subscribers at once; for if they do not at the outset, a larger amount of donation will be required ere they are admitted at some future period. Some people advise their young friends not to subscribe at first, on the plea of extra expense; but I am of a contrary opinion, for this reason, because, if it should so happen that duty, sickness, or any other cause, brought the non-subscriber down to the Presidency, he has not a home to go to, and there are not always friends to put up with; and, besides

that, people do not like to encroach on the hospitality of others; men like to be independent of their friends, and it is not always convenient for residents to receive travellers.

Subscribers, on the other hand, find an asylum at once at the club, where they can make themselves at home, and be under obligations to no one. There are comfortable bed-rooms, with nice furniture and clean linen; bath-rooms, with as much water as is required. The traveller on arrival finds all he wants; private apartments for himself and traps. He does just as he pleases; takes his meals in his own room, or in the public ones; he is seen by no one, or mixes with the rest, and, what is more to the purpose, he is able to mess himself within his means, and live on them, instead of launching out into extravagances.

The advantages, therefore, of belonging to the club are many; and, I think, when we come to consider them, and the small sum required for the donation, it is not much out of any one's pockets, and it will be paying money well laid out, which, it is more than probable, would be spent in some foolish way; while, by giving it to the club, the subscriber secures for himself a home for the whole of his stay in India.

Yet, with all its advantages, I am afraid that the club is a great temptation to the young men of the regiments at Madras. They cannot keep them-

selves therefrom, though difficulties innumerable may stare them in the face. The place is a lounge for all the idle young scamps at the Presidency, where they waste their time and throw away their money, and it is a very great pity that something is not done to check this portion of their expenses; but how it is to be prevented, I know not. A man is ready to quarrel with his friend if he talks to him about his expenditures; so that it is a dangerous experiment to try anything of the kind, for however good the motive, or kind and friendly the intention, it is never appreciated.

Nevertheless, it is a pity that such unbounded liberty should be allowed to the unthinking and extravagant portion of the community: yet what is to be done? Everyone must pay his bill; if not, his name is placarded in the reading-room, and, after a time, struck off the list of subscribers to the institution, the regulations of which are strict to the effect that, to use a common phrase, there is no "tick" allowed. If, then, people do pay their bills, who can interfere and say that any particular individual is extravagant?

The rule about non-payments is an excellent one, and is rigidly adhered to by the managing committee; but I should like to see some rule established, limiting the amounts of bills per mensem, to certain totals, according to rank; but, I suppose, the hot blood of youth would be up at that,

and they will argue against their being curbed in any way, so long as they pay up their accounts. I think, however, that with some management, arrangements might be made to prevent that lamentable extravagance which we see young men indulge in, from time to time. They ruin themselves by it. They cannot help becoming involved in debt.

The club is all very well for those who can afford it, or for those who know the value of money. As I said before, the poorest man can live there as economically as he likes; but it is downright ruination to the wild and unthinking, who indulge in things far above their means, and plunge headlong into expenses, which neither they nor their friends can afford to pay for. The club is one of the dearest, and yet it is one of the cheapest, places in Madras. It is applicable to both rich and poor; the general officer and the ensign; and it will be a sad thing to Madras if, by any carelessness or mismanagement, the concern is allowed to fall to the ground; for, as I said before, there is nothing to equal it in the whole of India.

CHAPTER V.

A Monsoon at Madras—A Shipwreck—Dangers of the Roadstead—A Vessel transferred by the Monsoon into a Garden—Another into a Rice-field—Madras Hawkers—Their Way of Dealing—Native Servants exact per Centage—Battle between the Parties on that Subject—An Assemblage of Troops at Gulindy—Five Days in Camp—A runaway Charger—Field Incidents—A Doctor in Danger—A Night Attack—Troops shelled out of a Square Redoubt.

IN consequence of the exposed state of the roadstead, the monsoon, or rather the effect of it, is felt much more at Madras than anywhere along the coast, thereby rendering it very dangerous for shipping lying at anchor, or indeed coming in. It is considered to be so hazardous, that the flag-staff is struck during its prevalence, as a signal for all vessels to leave the anchorage, giving timely warning that it is not safe to remain there longer than is absolutely necessary. All the smaller country craft invariably quit, and nothing is to be seen in

the roads at such a period, save the larger vessels, and of these only a very few.

The communicatioo from shore with ships in the roads is very hazardous, owing to the surf which rolls upon the beach with terrific violence, causing its roar to be heard for several miles inland. It not unfrequently occurs that ships and other vessels are cast away, and many lives lost. The sacrifice of valuable cargoes is oftentimes truly lamentable, and I cannot better sum up my remarks than by saying that the monsoon may be looked upon by many as a dreadful calamity, which not only blasts their prospects, but ruins them, perhaps, past redemption.

I myself witnessed a truly distressing circumstance of the above description, during the monsoon, when a very beautiful ship was completely lost, and the fortunes of the commander blighted for ever. She had come into Madras, laden with teak-timber, on account of government, from the Tenasserim provinces, and was waiting for the weather to moderate, previously to landing her cargo. The day after her arrival, it blew a dreadful gale, so much so that all the different vessels, large and small, slipped or cut their cables and stood out to sea, but the *Th——* held her ground beautifully, and weathered the gale, which blew with unabated fury for the whole of that night.

The day following there was a lull, and the captain determined on shifting his berth and bringing her close in shore, so as to be able to float out and land his timber in safety. He was advised by many seafaring men at Madras to remain where he was, as her anchor had good holding-ground, and there was no necessity for his landing his timber in such a hurry. One old gentleman, in particular, who was an intimate friend of Captain B——'s (Mr. D——, well known at Madras, but now no more), declared to him that he would not value his ship at a brass farthing, if he moved her from her anchorage.

However, in spite of all the advice he had received, he shifted his ship's berth and coming close in shore, commenced landing his timber. So secure did he consider his vessel to be, and so certain that there would be no rough weather, that he actually slept on shore that night, leaving the ship in charge of his chief officer. It blew a perfect hurricane during that awful night, and the sea rose tremendously high, and beat right into the buildings on the beach.

Towards morning, the hapless ship was discovered to be dragging her anchor, and drifting fast in shore. The mate saw the danger in which his ship was placed. To put sail upon her and stand out to sea was impossible, for the gale blew right on to the land. He therefore let down another anchor, in

the hopes of bringing her up; but such was the violence of the sea, and the consequent strain upon the cables, that in a very short time the chain of the last snapped like whip-cord, and the vessel came rapidly and struck the shore. I never can forget this truly appalling sight. A huge vessel, as she was, carried by the force of the mighty waves, as easily as a piece of cork, and dashed on to the beach, within twenty yards of the high road.

The agony of mind which the unfortunate captain suffered must have been intense. I saw him standing on the beach, evidently under great anxiety, without being able to avert the destruction of perhaps all he possessed in the world, and no doubt reproaching himself for his obstinacy in not having taken the advice of his friends for the safety of his ship. Shortly after she grounded, ropes and hawsers were passed on shore, and the whole crew, including officers, were landed in safety. The surf made a clean breach over her, from stem to stern, dashing the spray into the very houses, and drenching the thousands, who congregated to see the spectacle, to the skin. She was so strongly, and so well put together, that she lay on the shore for several months after, and was eventually taken to pieces by degrees.

The captain was from that time a broken-hearted man. He quitted Madras soon after, and went to Rangoon, where he died, without relations or friends

to cheer his last moments, which must have been embittered by the thoughts that his misfortunes were attributable to his own obstinate determination, on the occasion above related; for had he either gone out to sea with the other ships, or had he not shifted his berth, which his vessel had so nobly held during the previous gales, all might have been well.

I remember several other disastrous shipwrecks taking place along the coast, during that truly terrific monsoon. At Coringa, a place up the north-eastern coast, there was a large ship blown high and dry out of the water into the garden of one of the houses! The occupant of the mansion awaking one morning, saw his bed-room window wide open and something intruding, which he could not at all understand, but which, after due examination, proved to be the jib-boom end of the said ship; it was just as well she had not come further, else, I think, the sleep of the tenant of the house would have been disturbed in a manner that would not have conduced much to his comfort.

Up the river Hooghly, and in the neighbourhood of Calcutta, a huge East Indiaman, of eight hundred or a thousand tons, was lifted out of the water and landed in the middle of a rice-field, several hundred yards from the banks of the river. No one who has not witnessed the terrific effects of a monsoon storm in the east, can conceive the

mischief it causes. Suffice it to say, that such visitations are in themselves appalling, and attended with most ruinous consequences from the which it is ulmost impossible to recover.

The country along the coast is injured considerably. Plantations, which promised well, are laid low and destroyed, cultivation is checked, crops are blown down never to rise, tanks and reservoirs overflow their embankments, or burst them and inundate the surrounding country; houses and cottages and huts are unroofed, or fall into ruins; cattle are killed, and many other calamities befall the inhabitants, too numerous, but too well known, for me to enumerate.

Madras, like Calcutta and Bombay, is overrun with tribes of itinerant merchants, termed hawkers, or "box-wallāhs" (box-men), who travel with their wares packed in trunks, on the heads of coolies or porters, and consisting of articles of wearing, apparel, silks and satins, muslins, chintzes and prints; cloths, long, broad and narrow, and a vast variety of sundries, all which are procurable at moderate prices, if the purchaser but knew how to deal with those who vend them. Some of these fellows sell hams and bacon, salt beef and tongues, cheeses and red herrings; others again deal in sauces and pickles, jams, jellies, and preserves, and others crockery and glass ware, tin kettles and saucepans, and such tinker-like articles; while others dispose

of jewellery and so forth, manufactured in the country.

Those men, however, peculiarly termed "hawkers," and who sell European materials, as above enumerated, procure their supplies from the large shops, where auctions take place almost daily, and where they buy up all kinds of trash, damaged goods, and condemned invoices, for little or nothing, and which they carry about with them in their boxes, selling them again, sometimes profitably, and sometimes for less than what they gave. The former, if those they deal with are of the genus homo yclept "griffins," and the latter, if the contrary; the hawkers, however, are so expert in their business, that whatever money they lose at one house in the sale of any particular goods, they make up for at another, so that they generally come off the gainers.

These men are employed by native shopkeepers at Madras, the hawkers themselves receiving a slight per-centage on the goods sold. Many are the sole proprietors of their stock in trade, and wander about with their little all in their boxes; so that they are principally concerned in the disposal of their wares, and try all that artful cunning and native roguery can possibly devise to sell what they have to as great advantage as they can; but this depends upon the individual with whom they have to deal, as I before remarked; if the hawker finds he has

got hold of a green-horn, he will lie till he is white in the face, and fleece the poor wretch in the most barefaced manner, selling things for two rupees which may probably not have cost him one quarter of that sum, and cheating his victim with the utmost unconcern. But, if he has to deal with an old hand, he is more cautious in his proceedings; pretends to be very ill treated, very humble, and very poor, while he is, at the same time, keenly alive to his own interest, trying, if possible, by a bold, well concocted falsehood, to get to the blind side of his customer.

The hawkers invariably ask twice or three times the value of the article to be purchased; but the wary, experienced buyer always gets what he requires for what he thinks is its intrinsic value. They demean themselves in the most abject, servile manner, and will do anything to drive a good bargain. I have seen a man leave my compound three times before he would agree to give me some flannel for the price I offered him, packing and unpacking his box each time!

These fellows speak a queer jargon of English, which people unaccustomed to them cannot well comprehend. I will give the reader a few specimens of their language, in order to show what strange creatures they are in their way. It is, however, very probable that, as their pronunciation has a peculiarity in it, none but those who have

been in India will be able to understand what they say; but if the reader will simply pronounce the words as I have written them, with a broadness of accent, as it were, I think he will not be far wrong.

The hawker, then, that is to say, the proprietor, walks about with his one, two, or three boxes (this according to his wealth and consequent importance), following in his rear. He is generally a well-dressed, fat, greasy, pawn-chewing rogue, with a look as cunning and as knowing as he really and truly is. He stalks into the compound with the greatest impudence possible; and, whether the occupant of the mansion (be he single or otherwise) is busy or not, his ears are saluted by the well-known cry of

"Hawker, mame!" (i. e. anglicè, "Hawker, mame!") We will suppose that there are ladies in the house. The man and his followers are called in, and he is desired to expose his goods.

"What have you got, sir?" is the all-important question put by the fair dame of the domain.

"Fine ting gat, mame," says the fellow, "too much ee finer, mame; missees please to see; sù-leek, jacknate-mùsleen got, mùll-mùll, laug-cùllât, sùffak-dirreel, nôât fafer, letter fafer, blackeen, to-day, noting done sell, mamo; woe-dee-klong, writing yink, wafer, shoo ribbin, isb-shtay-face, babbin, broos, coam, I yebry ting gat, mame; plenty ting, very cheafer, frice for missees make buy from me."

"Well, show, sir; let us see these things," is the order.

"Ees, mame!" replies he; "I make show 'mmediately!"

With this, he makes his men arrange his boxes around him, takes off the wax-cloth covers, or tarpaulins, from their tops, which he spreads with great care on the floor; he then extracts a bunch of keys from his waistband, and, ere he applies them to the locks, mutters a kind of prayer over each box, that he may be fortunate in disposing of his things to advantage; this done, he cracks his knuckles on his head (in that way so peculiar to natives), and forthwith proceeds to expose the contents, sitting in the midst, and opening each article with the utmost placidity of countenance, and, enumerating their quantity, quality, and price, expatiating upon the former, and declaring that the latter was far below their real worth!

"Missees want too muchee finer gros dis napples? I givce very cheaper; wonly three rupee yard; s'pose lady want, can make nice dress for the ball; güvrner gran ball soon come, mame—missees know very vell; I got three, pour diprent colour; white, pinkce, like rose, bloo, girreen, and yallo; all same frice, mame."

The lady thinks the "*frice*" demanded too high, and asks, or rather tells the man,

"I will take enough for a dress, if you give it

me for twelve annas (eighteen-pence) a yard; I won't give a pice more."

"Noa, mame! I no can give! I first a come to this house—go nowhere else. Missees can have for one rupee eight annas the yard. Makee 'bones' (bargain) for foor hāker, mame!"

"No!" is the reply; "I will not give you more than twelve annas the yard. If you are not satisfied, shut up your box, and go away!"

"I foor man, mame!" says the hawker. "What I do? No rice got to-day! Very well; take, mame, for fourteen annas! Ahbā swāmee! What for, missees, so strick with foor black mans?"

And with this wise query, he proceeds to measure out the requisite number of yards for the full quantum of a lady's dress. And here it behoves the purchaser to be on the look out, for these rogues have a peculiar way of measuring their things, a slight of hand which restores them two inches and upwards out of each yard. This, of course, is their perquisite, and unless the buyer is keenly alive to his own interests, and has the article purchased measured over again by one of the servants of the house, the probabilities are, that there will be a deficit of one or two yards after Mr. Hawker has left the place; he will cheat you with the utmost *sang-froid*: but pray hear him again.

"White satteen, mame; nice for makee the dress for marry business that young missee (if there

should be one present), very cheaper! Good eeshtrang black satteen for make the sarry mournin business, or nice bombzeen for the ditto."

"No, don't want; go on, sir!"

"Ees mame—I show quick—missees want nice gauge, babbin net, sater silleek, mather-furl-battan, eeshtakins, roooge for makee red the face, laonder-water, eeshtarup-lather, shaving-soap, rajor, toot-brush, boan-batten, foolish-cap-safer, baris-grees, maksar-woil, gan fowder, cussin-caf, markin-yink, shoes eeshtring, woedluce, oeshmelling salt, saddle's fowder, soda fowder, essin-ginger, rolan-wodonto, vilef fowder, sissor, penknife, ladies' wombrella, keed glov, hule-antic," &c. &c., and so he will go on, emptying the contents of one box after the other and replacing them with the utmost rapidity, all the while grumbling and lamenting over his ill-fate in not having made more "*bones*," as the term is amongst them.

Should the man be a vender of hams and cheeses, he will swear through thick and thin that his articles are the freshest and most delicious to be procured, whereas in nine cases out of ten, the hams are swarming with maggots, and the cheeses are performing a promenade in his box!

"Fine Yarruck hame got sar," he will say, "fresh, just rived from Yengland sar! Cheafer. Fine tongue, salt beef, salt-ship-fork, fine cheese, Glaster or Chuddar, very woily! Good fickles, yonyon,

cowcomber, garkeen, call-flor, mickees fickle, all fresh, sar! Master, please make buy? Look and see; no sell noting to-day; long way come, sar."

You sometimes do pick up a tolerable cheese or an eatshle ham; but it is seldom enough. The articles hawked about being the refuse of the market, bought up at auction as damaged or good for nothing.

It is a truly amusing sight to watch these men as they dispose of their wares; pretending to be great losers, while, if the truth were known, they are vending their goods for perhaps double of what they gave at the auction. It is customary whenever a hawker sells anything to the master or mistress of a house, for the servants of the establishment to demand of the merchant a kind of fee, or per-centage, upon the price given for such things. Thus, if a hawker gets five rupees, the menials (who are on the look out behind some corner) demand one-sixteenth of every rupee, or perhaps more; and this sum is very often obtained by a regular stand-up fight. The hawker denying their right to make such a levy, and the servants insisting upon the justice of their demands, as customary on their employers paying away money to anybody.

I have wittoessed many a hard tussle between these two parties. On one occasion, I recollect my domestics seized hold of the poor man's boxes and

detained them in durance vile until he paid his tax. Upon this he became perfectly furious, threw off his turban and clothes, and putting down his head, as natives do in all pugilistic encounters, rushed frantically at the foremost double-fisted, and letting fly at him right and left, in a very short space of time gallantly put the whole posse of my servants to flight, after which he picked up his things, vociferating and abusing in the most laughable manner possible.

Natives of India, particularly Hindoos, will argue for hours, and fight most resolutely over a single penny as if it was a pound; and so obstinate are they, even when cheating, that they will tell the most abominable falsehoods, and gain their end by making people actually believe that what they may be urging was downright and honest truth.

I have already mentioned that our commander-in-chief was very fond of exercising the troops and having sham-fights. We had had several very interesting affairs at different times; but not content with what had been done, he was bent upon putting his military talents into active exercise by enacting a variety of tactics which proved him to be perfectly conversant with his duty, not only as a soldier but as a general officer. So much for having learned his lessons in the Wellington school. I wonder how his excellency would have managed in real warfare, should it have been his fortuna to

command on occasions such as troops are employed at in India?

Well, no doubt, but he would have found considerable difference between that and the campaigns to which he had been accustomed when serving in the Peninsula. He determined one day to go through sundry movements on an extensive scale, such as he had witnessed on some occasion under the great general, and for this purpose ordered the assemblage of all the available troops at and in the vicinity of Madras, to concentrate at Guindy, near St. Thomas's Mount.

The ground selected for this grand display was in the neighbourhood of the race-course, with the river, wood, and broken country dividing the hostile forces. The troops, exclusively of cavalry and artillery, amounted to 3000 men, and the whole were under the immediate command of the commander-in-chief, who directed the movements of both the attacking and defending party.

We were encamped with two other regiments of infantry in a very pleasant spot; a strong position on the banks of the river nearest Madras, with the enemy's advanced pickets on the opposite side, and a narrow bridge extending in an oblique direction, and which was beautifully enfiladed by a battery of guns placed for that purpose. We had four days of it under canvass altogether, and enjoyed our-

selves much more than during the dusty suffocating work at Madras, already recounted.

The evening of the first day opened our campaign. We were in full march to take up our position in brigade with other regiments, during which I had an adventure with my Bucephalus, which might have terminated fatally, or rather seriously. The horse I was mounted on was a young Arab, almost unbroken, never having been with troops before.

My fidgetty old commanding officer was ever on the tenter-hooks of anxiety and perplexity about nothing, worrying everybody, and doing no good at all. I happened to be riding in rear of the column. He had already troubled and tormented me much during the whole day, by his repeated notes, and, while we were marching, with messages and questions, all of the most childish nature. At last, he sent his orderly to me saying he wanted to speak to me.

I galloped up to the head of the column, answered his question (which, by the way, was to know if the colours were uncased or not!) and wheeled round to return to my place in the rear. But my horse did not appear to wish to go there; on the contrary, he dashed off towards the race-course, close to which we were at the time marching, before I was aware of it, or had any idea that

he was about to run the race which he subsequently did.

The plain on the course was thronged with multitudes of men, women, and children; horses, elephants, and camels; conveyances of all kinds; bullock hackeries, and palankeens, all coming to see the fight; so that I had a most difficult task to perform in avoiding running over some unfortunate pedestrian, or some conveyance. The horse regularly took the bit between his teeth and was running away with me as fast as he possibly could.

I saw there was no help for it (and it is the worst thing a man can do to try and stop a runaway horse); so, first of all, unbuckled my sword belt and let that drop, and after that threw down my sword which I held drawn in my right hand. I then took up my reins and gathered myself well into my saddle, put my feet into the stirrups, and made up my mind to have a regular good run for it, provided I did not do so against any one.

It so fortunately turned out that no mishap occurred. I contrived by dint of gentle guiding, to get him on to the course, and when once on that I gave him the spur to his heart's content, and took him the whole round twice, as hard as he could lay legs to the ground. This quite sufficed him, and, when I pulled him up, which I only then attempted

to do, he stopped without any difficulty, and was as quiet as a lamb.

He never ran away with me again, but as there was no trusting him after the trick he played me, and as there was much work for me on that occasion requiring a steady horse, I mounted another which I had ready saddled in case of any accident, suspecting that something of the kind would happen, as it turned out. I must confess that I felt somewhat nervous at first starting on my flying career; for the immense concourse of people amongst whom my runaway charger carried me, rendered my situation anything but pleasant or safe. I only wonder that I did not break somebody's neck, or my own.

We had a capital fight on that day. There was plenty of marching and counter-marching, changing of fronts and deployments, and so on. At one time all the infantry was formed in squares in echelon, or rather I should say, that it was intended it should be so. But when we came to see our situation we found ourselves between two squares directly in line with us; and, when we opened fire upon the attacking cavalry, which dashed down upon us, we were exposed on either flank to a murderous file-firing, while we ourselves peppered away at our friends in fine style. Had there been bullets, instead of blank cartridge, what a pretty business it would have been!

This shows the necessity of troops, when exercising, being made to go through every movement with the greatest care as to precision. If such mistakes are to occur in a sham fight on mere parade days, how much more likely will they be when in contact with an enemy, and how fatal the consequences? Movements in cehellon are the most simple, though at the same time the most difficult to be performed with due correctness, and consequently require the greatest care and watchfulness. It is impossible for squares in line to act independently of each other, so that it behoves the commanding officer of a battalion to see that his flanks are clear before he forms it into a square.

Several most ludicrous things happened whilst we were situated as above related, independently of our blazing away into each other. Our commandant, being as fidgetty in the field as he was in his *sanctum*, was doing nothing but giving wrong words of command, and making blunders by the dozens. His horse was a subject of the greatest anxiety to him, for in consequence of being a bad rider, he was in great alarm lest his charger should play him some tricks, or kick and bite somebody. On forming square preparatory to resisting cavalry, which were threatening us with a charge, our worthy chief became entangled between two sections of one of the companies, which happened to be wheeling outwards; up went the horses' heels,

and away flew the men, some sprawling on the ground, while others were thrown into confusion from the fear of having their brains dashed out, or their legs broken.

The major meanwhile, holding on like grim death by the pommel of his saddle, was vociferating most strenuously and frantically for the fellows to get out of the way, which earnest request was quite superfluous, for they did so of their own accord. This over, his horse came in contact with mine, and both set to kicking furiously. I, not liking the situation in which I found myself, with the chance of a fractured limb, or injury to my charger, gave the hostile and pugnacious brute two or three hearty good progs with my sword, which very soon rid me of him. The major was certainly very much afraid of this horse. When with the men his attention was so taken up with looking after this self-same animal, that paying any to the men was quite out of the question. He cared not what became of them, what they did, or how they acted, so long as he was safe on his beast's back.

But our man of physic also gave us cause for merriment. He was a strange little fellow was poor old Mac——, and was constantly doing something ludicrous. To look at him was quite sufficient to create a laugh. I had warned him that in the event of a charge of cavalry, he was to take shelter inside the square, otherwise he would run

the risk of being cut down by the troopers. He however laughed at me, and insisted on staying where he was, declaring his intention of climbing up a tree if there was any danger. Presently, the cavalry poured down upon our squares.

The worthy doctor did not like the aspect of affairs, and forthwith nimbly jumped up on the nearest tree to him, during which operation he was espied by some of the troopers. No sooner did they come up to the neighbourhood where he was perched upon a branch, looking anything but comfortable, than one of the officers dashed up to the tree, and desired him to come down upon pain of being shot through the head. Several of the men, too, levelled their carbines and pistols and fired them at him, accompanying their shots with loud shouts and threats.

This had such an effect upon poor "*pills*" that he lost heart, and fairly bellowed out for quarter. It was indeed a laughable sight. The troopers and our men roared with delight. The firing, attack, and defence ceased, to witness the ludicrous position of our man of medicine, who fearing doubtless that there might be bullets in the pieces levelled at him, continued dodging behind the boughs and branches of the trees, and ended by finally throwing himself on to the ground as if he had been electrified, and running for it as fast as his stumpy legs could carry him.

The doctor contrived to take shelter in our square-

and, when safe, expressed himself in most bitter terms against the cavalry officers and their marauding troopers for having played him such a trick. He stoutly maintained that being a non-combatant the enemy had no right to molest him, for he cured and healed wounds for all parties instead of having anything to do with inflicting them. But he was mistaken, for the troopers thought it too good an opportunity to have a little fun at the expense of the man who physicked, blistered, and bled them. The worthy doctor's adventure was a standing joke against him ever after.

That day's operations terminated in a night attack. Our troops were forced to retreat, followed by the enemy, who harassed our rear with their cavalry, while a large body of their infantry came upon one of our flanks. We took up a position however in a dry tank, the embankment of which served us as a parapet, the whole representing a square redoubt. On one side of this, we contrived to place some guns as it were *en barbette*, and kept up a good fire, which held the enemy in check, while a strong detachment occupied a considerable wood, from whence our skirmishers blazed away beautifully. From this wood our light troops were speedily driven and forced to take shelter in the aforesaid redoubt, under cover of the fire of two guns brought to bear upon the wood.

From the redoubt the enemy endeavoured to force us, first, by means of shelling. The shells (otherwise pumpkins hollowed out and filled with some combustibles), fell like hail upon us. I wonder no one was hurt. One fell close to me, and bursting, splashed its contents over me most delightfully. An Irish soldier standing by observed, "Its swate stuff that in you, my good friend, that'll never kill a man!" The mortar practice was very good, but not having the desired effect, the enemy stormed the redoubt, and drove at us pell-mell, with such impetuosity, that nothing could withstand them.

The troops holding this redoubt were one battalion of European foot artillery, acting as infantry, and a wing of mine own regiment. Upon entering the tank, we observed one of the artillerymen coming smartly down on his knees, with his firelock ready cocked, but facing to the rear instead of towards the enemy. His commanding officer seeing him take up such a strange position, exclaimed "I am sure that fellow is an Irishman! None but an Irishman would do such a thing! What are you about, sir?"

"Is'nt it knaling, that I am about, your honour," said the Irishman (for he was a son of Erin), "and what will ye have me a doin?"

"What are you kneeling there, and in that direction for, sir?" inquired the commandant.

"Sure, y'er honor!" exclaimed the Irishman, "an may not the inimy be taking us in the rare, and is'nt it to stop him doing that same, that I am knaling here, sir?"

"Come back to your place, you blockhead!" shouted the other, "and never for a moment think that an artilleryman will ever allow an enemy in his rear!"

This short colloquy created a good laugh, and Paddy fell into his place, saying, "Will, and I thought I was doing right."

During the time we were thus placed in this dry tank, matters were very nearly becoming serious. We had received orders to hold the place as long as we could, and to evacuate it only as a last resource. The evening was very dark, the enemy advanced upon us, and, before we were aware of it, they were on the top of the parapet or bund of the tank, and had crossed bayonets with our men, who had become so excited, particularly the Europeans, that they swore they would not hudge a peg, seeing that they had received orders to hold their ground.

The sepoys, meanwhile, commenced crying out and abusing each other, and pushing and striking with their firelocks, and, had it not been for the exertions of the officers, there would have been a fight in earnest, and probably some blood spilt; however, fortunately, we contrived to separate the combatants, the assailants, according to arrange-

ments, drove us out of our position, and we effected our retreat in good order, carrying with us all our wounded, as also sundry tumbrils full of ammunition, which latter would have fallen into the hands of the enemy, had not the men dragged them away with them.

It is a most dangerous thing to bring troops in contact on these occasions; serious consequences may result therefrom, and convert a field-parade into a scene of disaster and confusion; from the hurry and excitement of the moment, the men do not exactly know what they are about, and a spirit of rivalry may ultimately bring them to blows, and thus do more mischief than can possibly be conceived.

This night-work was the first of the kind I had ever witnessed. The vertical firing was beautiful, and the flashing of cannon and musquetry something very grand. We only wanted the whizzing of the bullets, dead and dying, blood and wounds, to make the thing real. What a pity it is that soldiers cannot always have some fighting instead of the monotonous routine of garrison-duty! Lucky, indeed, have been our brethren in arms, of the Bengal and Bombay Presidencies, to see so much as they have done of the realities of the military profession. Would that our troops could also have been employed!

The glorious campaigns of Afghanistan, Scinde,

and the Punjaub, are worthy of admiration in the chronicles of fame; though we can scarcely help feeling envious at the good fortune which brought our brother officers in contact with any enemy, and which alone is the true way to know and appreciate the merits and true joys of a soldier's life. We poor benighted ones must, I suppose, look on, or confine our doings to the jungles and stockades of marauding robber rajahs or petty zemindars, while our more fortunate comrades are playing their parts on the wider plains of glory which lay before them. Nobly have they done their duty, led, as they were, by the daring Gough, the gallant Hardinge, the chivalrous Napier, and the other renowned generals of the day, whose names have been immortalized in the pages of history, which will hand them down to future generations, as proofs that the British soldier has ever done his duty in his country's cause.

I hope, however, the time may come when our coast army will again have opportunities of distinguishing itself, and of upholding the character which it has ever deserved. I hope that we, too, may participate in those deeds of daring, which will add lustre to our country's crown, win us laurels of military reputation, and prove to the world that though benighted, as we are called, we still are the fighting army of Madras, as we were in days gone by, when led by the great Wellington against the many enemies with which it had to contend.

CHAPTER VI.

The last Day's Affair—A Kick from a vicious Horse, and a Fall into a Paddy-field—A Search for a Battery, and an accidental Shot—Advantages resulting from Sham Fights—Military Tactics—Staff Officers—Too many in the Field objectionable—Confusion caused by Orders and Counter-Orders—Orders arrive to prepare for foreign Lands—The Troubles and Annoyances of Preparation—How requisite it is that Men should be made to comprehend the Regulations of the Service—The Necessity of personal Supervision in all Matters connected with Military Duty—The Advantages resulting from the Fulfilment of this Duty—The Disadvantages springing from its Neglect—Nothing more easy than preparing a Regiment for Embarkation.

THE last day's business was the climax of all our battles; a grand conclusion, advance and retreat, skirmishing, charging, rushing here and there, and getting dreadfully hot with bushels of dust, and powder-smoke by way of refreshment. There certainly was a vast display of military science. There were batteries stormed and carried, guns captured

and spiked, mines blown up and prisoners taken. Our chief was mightily pleased with all that had taken place, and expressed himself in high terms of applause on our discipline, concluding his speech by saying, that he should indeed be proud to have the honour of leading an army composed of such efficient troops against the enemy.

I met with a serious accident towards the close of that evening's work, but which gave rise to much merriment at my expense, for the time being. I had to convey an order to a different part of the field to that where my regiment was stationed, to a body of troops acting as a kind of check against the enemy, who was making an attempt to turn our left flank. The enemy having, in the darkness of the evening, given up all hopes of succeeding in doing so, the order was for the aforesaid detached party to fall back and join the main body. To effect this, I had to cross several wet rice-fields, which lay between me and the detachment to which I had to go. To cross these fields on horseback was out of the question, owing to the darkness and the deep mud, into which, if I had taken my horse, he would have got himself and his rider into a miserable mess.

I therefore dismounted, desiring my man to wait where he was until I returned, and proceeded on foot as fast as I could, running along the narrow bunds, or banks, which divided the fields and regu-

lated the irrigation. This also was matter of difficulty, for I stumbled first on one side, then on another, sinking up to my knees in mud and water, almost every step I took.

The progress I made was not very rapid, and I had not proceeded very far when I heard the neighing of some horses, and men talking; before I was aware of their propinquity, I came upon them. There must have been three or four led horses, belonging evidently to some of the officers of the force. One of these brutes, (and he was a vicious one too, as I soon ascertained to my cost,) hearing somebody approaching, let out his hind legs most furiously, and gave me such a salute, that he kicked me over, and I fell back into the mud-water and long paddy, on the broad of my back, where I lay, much hurt by a severe blow on my right thigh.

This was anything but pleasant, particularly as I had on a nice, new jacket, which was, of course, spoiled past redemption. The pain was very great, and I really thought my leg broken; the horse had had ample scope, and dealt the blow forcibly, so that I made up my mind about the matter, and fancied splints, bandages, and even amputation. In this state I might have stoyed all night, for I was unable to move, in consequence of the pain in my leg, and I could only just manage to raise myself out of the water, mud, and paddy, by resting on my hands, placed behind me. Not being then in a

moveable condition, I thought it best to try and gain aid from somebody else, so I set to and bawled most lustily, hoping that passers by would hear me.

The villains with the led horses had passed on, without taking any notice of what had happened to me; however a havildar's patrol of ours happened, fortunately, to come that way, and I immediately recognised the voices of the men, as they floundered up to where I lay. I called out to them by name, and begged of them, in the name of the god of war, and goddess of paddy-fields, to lend a hand and pull me out of the mire. My voice brought them to the spot.

"Arreh! Arreh! Ao bhai!" exclaimed one of them. "Dekh, ajtan sahib chikkur men purra hai!"

"Come, come, my lads, here is the adjutant stuck in the mud!" And they forthwith lifted me up, and carried me on their firelocks into camp. Meanwhile, I sent one of the fellows to the detachment with the orders of which I was the messenger when I met with the accident, telling him to state the cause of my not coming myself, &c.

I heard the major vociferating most furiously after the unfortunate adjutant; wanting to know where he was. This was as we passed the column which happened to be halted, at the time, on the roadside, and one of my bearers said to the men, that the adjutant had been killed and wounded,

picked out of the mud, and was being carried home.

This important intelligence flew among the men in a short space of time, and at length reached the major, who made a great fuss about it, as much as if I had had my head knocked off.

"Ah!" he exclaimed, "I suppose the young whelp has been playing some of his tricks again, and been thrown from that brute of a horse of his. I always told him he would break his neck for him; and he can't ride a bit!"

But the major was considerably out of his reckoning, as he found out afterwards. Fortunately, there were no bones broken. The little doctor, of tree celebrity, examined the leg, and said that I had had a narrow escape, as from the violence of the blow the thigh-bone might have been broken; as it was, the contusion was a severe one; it might have been worse, and so forth. However, severe or not, it did not prevent my returning to my duty shortly after.

But I met with another adventure, which, by the way, I ought to have recorded before the above-mentioned mishap. However, it will be none the worse for taking its place here. We were ordered to attack a wood, occupied by a strong detachment of the enemy, in front of which was a tank full of water, and on the bank of which was a well-constructed battery, armed with field-pieces in em-

brasure. The night was dark, so that we were obliged to reconnoitre most carefully, before bringing our troops under fire. We had been informed that, in addition to this battery, the enemy had constructed another to enfilade a considerable space of ground, by which an attacking force might approach, but with the exact situation of which no one seemed to be acquainted.

I volunteered my services to endeavour to ascertain the whereabouts the battery was, in order, if possible, to avoid its fire in our advance upon the position. I was not long in doing this. The battery spoke for itself, much to my astonishment. I had proceeded about half a mile in the direction of the wood, and had halted to hear if I could distinguish any signs of troops, or artillery, or anything else to indicate the locality I was in quest of, when suddenly a bugle sounded the fire, and I discovered that I was close upon the enemy's post.

I mounted my horse and went on to my right, thinking that the said battery must be somewhere about in that direction, the more particularly so as the one I had just quitted commenced playing away most furiously. This convinced me that our troops were already advancing, and I made haste to try and let them know the situation of the other battery. Chance alone gave me the desired information, for hearing the tramp of horses' hoofs, and imagining that we were at hand, the battery opened fire upon

the supposed enemy ; one of the guns was fired off close to my ears, and had I been a foot closer, the chances were I should have been blown to atoms. The report almost stunned me, and knocked me off my horse, which reared and plunged most furiously.

Having discovered the battery, I retreated, as hastily as the darkness of the evening would permit me, joined our party, and, taking a full company of my own regiment with me, we attacked the battery in flank, entered it, and drove the gunners from their guns, which we forthwith took possession of, making those who served them our prisoners. This was a most amusing piece of business, from the darkness of the night, the fugitive gunners, forgetting where they were in rushing to the rear, tumbled head over heels into the tank, while those who bolted over the parapet, got a ducking in the ditch, which was full of water. I wonder nobody was drowned.

The richest part of the booty taken was a bottle of cognac brandy, a tumbler, and goglet of water, which the gallant subaltern of artillery, who commanded the battery, had had the precaution to bring with him, to quench his thirst. This prize was most acceptable, for, not having had anything since breakfast, a good glass of brandy punch was not to be despised. The capture of this battery produced similar success with the other, which was also boldly assaulted and taken. The enemy were

driven, pell-mell, out of the wood, and the affair terminated at about eight o'clock, much to our delight, for we were all heartily tired, and longed for our comfortable dinner and glass of good cold beer, which awaited us in our mess-tents.

Sham-fights, as I before observed, are very beneficial to the troops. They give the officers and soldiery an insight into the system of warfare, without its concomitant horrors; and, I think that, if such exercise were to be more attended to and kept up, the army would be much better drilled, and better able to go through those same movements when in actual contact with the enemy. Troops should be constantly practised together in large bodies. They should be always playing at soldiers. The general officers in command of divisions and brigades, should insist upon such practice, and themselves see that whatever is done, is performed correctly, and in strict conformity to "*the book*." Officers and men will thus have some idea of the realities of warfare; they will know the dangers of bad manœuvring; the advantages of one movement, and the disadvantages of another; and the whole would be exemplified in a manner comprehensible to all parties, so that every one might know what is expected of each individual in the hour of real strife, when a man's brains must be cool, his thoughts collected, his nerves strong, and his eyes open; when the entire energies of his very

soul will be brought into active exercise ; when, in the man, he proves himself a soldier ; and that soldier, whatever his rank, a very hero !

But, although these mimic campaigns are useful and tend much to the advantage of troops, I think there are some irregularities in the interior management of such doings, which ought not to exist. These should be checked, as doing much more mischief than good. I observed, on every occasion that we were out, that there were too great a number of staff-officers, and, consequently, too many orders. This is, in my humble opinion, a crying evil, as it stands to reason that a plurality of orders evinces want of decision, as well as want of regularity in movement, such as is requisite for the proper and efficient handling and success of a body of troops when in contact with an enemy, particularly if that enemy be a powerful one.

The efficiency of a staff does not exist in the number of the officers composing it. I would ten times rather have two or three intelligent and well-mounted officers, than twenty useless, gold-laced coxcombs, who gallop about to show off ; who forget an order the moment it is given to them, and who deliver whatever comes uppermost in their empty heads, thereby causing irreparable mischief and confusion, a sacrifice of valuable life, and a complete failure in the end of any intended move-

ment, which would else have been crowned with success.

On the occasion of the short five days' campaign, I had frequent opportunities of witnessing the working of the objections I have above alluded to. We had not only the commander-in-chief's staff, but also those of the division generals, as well as of brigades; and, in addition to them, we had all the deputies and deputy-assistants, and sub-assistants of all the departments, many of whom knew as much of their duties in the field, as the under-clerks of their respective offices inside the old fort. We will make no allusions to the many mounted spectators who, to show off their smartness and zeal, were rushing about most frantically, and interfering most distressingly, with the movements of the troops.

For instance, one man would come up and order the regiment to move on; it should have done so long ago: another would immediately come and direct it to halt; it ought never to have moved at all! Another would rush up and tell us to deploy, and another would say—no! not to deploy, but change front to the left.

Again, another fellow would say that the regiment was to form square, which would be flatly contradicted by somebody else, who would order us to open fire from centre to flank, and from flanks to centre; then kneeling; then by files, and then not to fire at all; now to advance in line; now to change;

now to halt, &c., and a thousand other blundering, nonsensical stuff, sufficient to try the patience of Job, and which was not only annoying to the officers, but harassing to the soldiery, who were worked off their legs by the perpetual moving backward and forward, when they might have been standing still. If such things go on at a sham-fight, what dreadful confusion and disaster must there be at a real engagement?

How necessary then is it that officers commanding and regulating the movements of troops should be careful that their staff are well acquainted with their orders, and that those orders are perfectly and distinctly conveyed to the parties concerned? I do believe that the many distressing failures, and the sacrifice of life consequent thereon, which do occur and have occurred, have been owing more to the non-comprehension of the orders intended, than from the superiority of the enemy.

If troops are not made to understand what is required of them, how can they possibly perform their duties satisfactorily, or with success? And what is more likely to throw the steadiest body of men into confusion than their being made to do things which are not intended should be done, merely by the stupidity of some of these superfluous staff?

There may be times when it would be found requisite to countermand an order, but that even can,

I fancy, be avoided by precaution and determination of purpose. A good general should make his arrangements with steadiness and resolution, and not be unsettled, or changing in purpose. Determination in action proves the man, and gives him success. He ought to regulate his movements in such a manner as not to require multiplicity of orders, or of any alteration in his original intentions, and he should have those under his command in such a perfect state of discipline, and so well in hand, that his wishes would be at once obeyed, without the necessity of repetition, or a chance of misconception.

An officer in command of a regiment who requires an order to perform any particular manœuvre more than once, is not fit to hold his command. I say again, that the plurality of staff-officers, and a repetition of orders, are both highly objectionable. Everything that is superfluous and not absolutely necessary, should be avoided; and the less bawling and shouting, ordering and counter-ordering, marching and counter-marching, galloping here and galloping there, the better. The more moving there is, the more likely is the enemy to benefit by it. If movements are necessary, let them be performed with caution, precision, and decision. If orders are to be conveyed, the best, easiest, and safest method is by writing on a slip of paper, as one of our famous generals always did. Orders verbatim

are likely to be wrongly conveyed or misconceived, particularly with staff who are not trustworthy, but when down on paper there can be no mistake at all!

The sad confusion caused by these truly objectionable drawbacks is more than it is possible for any one to conjecture. Even on the common occasion of a field-day, it is distressing to witness the various blunders committed, and the shameful exhibitions made by those who should know better. What an injustice is it to the men? Their steadiness and discipline suffer, and their valuable lives are lost, entirely from the mistakes committed by those very persons who are intended to lead them aright, and to uphold their character, but who, by their ignorance and downright stupidity, do all they can to tarnish the one or to jeopardize the other.

The many heart-rending disasters which took place at various times during the last war, and which have thrown such a cloud over the bright lustre of our arms, were entirely owing to a want of proper military arrangement and spirited resolution. The army was not to blame, the fault lay with those who commanded it. England and India will never forget the fatal retreat from Cabool, and the dreadful slaughter of our best and bravest in the passes! Alas! such should never have happened, but that

they *did* happen can be attributed entirely to bad generalship.

We have learned a lesson which will, I trust, prove one to our future leaders, and induce them at all times to bear in mind, when employed before the enemy (with the honour of their own country, and their own reputation at stake), that mature consideration, and steadfastness of purpose, should ever be their guide in all their movements, remembering also that a watchful enemy will invariably gain an advantage in the slightest false move they may make when opposed to them.

Such false moves therefore must be avoided as most dangerous, and nothing, I think, is more likely to cause them than the many mistakes committed by staff-officers in conveying messages and orders entrusted to them. He who holds a situation of the kind I allude to, responsible as it is, and who cannot remember a simple verbal message, ought not to be allowed to continue in it; and, if he forgets it on a common field-day, what will he do when the remembering it is of a thousand times greater importance!

And when we come to consider the irreparable mischief which is frequently caused by such proofs of forgetfulness, how necessary is it for general officers to select such men for their Aids as will prove themselves efficient in the hour of need, and

who, instead of committing blunders, will uphold the characters of the seniors they are serving, and the troops with whom they are employed.

Again, a staff-officer, to be a useful one, should be a man well acquainted with every particle of the duties of a soldier, as well as those of an officer. Without this most essential knowledge, it cannot be expected that he will be of that assistance which his designation implies. How many do we find holding situations who are totally unfit for them? I do not allude to men in office at present, though my remark may in some measure apply to them, also; but I allude more particularly to those officers attached to general officers in the field. One young man I have known, A.D.C. to his *paternity*, who could not actually go through his facings, and on being one day desired to perform the "manual exercise," actually asked what it meant!!

A man who knows not his duty himself, is incapable of comprehending the nature of his superior's intentions or plans, and is consequently of no use when required. A staff-officer should be an intelligent person, not only acquainted with the duties of an officer and a soldier, but conversant with all military detail; reconnoissance and surveying; a thorough knowledge of the language of the country, as well as of the characters, prejudices, castes, customs, and religions of the natives. He should

also be a good horseman, for a bad rider cannot be a smart officer, when with troops in the field.

I have met with young gold-laced sparks who knew no more of their duty than the recruit from the plough, and who thought of nothing but their self-importance, their tandems, or their horses. Such men are not worth their salt, and how many there are on the staff of the army, I will leave my military readers, who know how these matters are arranged, to guess, and the inexperienced to find out hy and bye, when they come to gain an insight into the mysteries of Government patronage, such as it has been of late years.

General officers in selecting their personal staff generally take their own relatives as a matter of course, without reference to their aptitude for their situations, thereby doing themselves and the service at large the deepest injustice. Where the public good is concerned, private feelings should be set aside, and in fixing upon field aids, general officers should select those who are most likely to prove of service to them, instead of such as are liable to bring disgrace and failure upon any of their undertakings.

There is a rule, I believe, in our army prohibiting officers being employed on staff situations, who have not done two years' regimental duty, and who have not made themselves qualified as interpreters in one or more languages. Both these restrictions

are very proper; but I think as regards the former, the time allowed is insufficient, because I am of opinion that no officer is, or can possibly be, thoroughly conversant with his duties as a regimental one in that short period. 'Tis indeed short; one half being frequently spent at the adjutant's drill, and the other half in little or nothing better than sheer idleness and dissipation; probably on leave of absence on some excursion, or on sick certificate.

As regards the remaining portion of the regulation alluded to, passing in Hindustanee entitles men to any situation which interest will purvey for them, though, I think, if we were to consult the Army List, we should find many now high in office, holding responsible government situations, who have not even gone through that important ordeal, and who know as much of the oriental languages as the raw griffin fresh from England; while many, many a man who has mastered one language, is forced to hide his talents under the bushel of obscurity, and eke out his miserable career in doing regimental duty, which is at all times irksome, but becomes more so under the circumstance of his not obtaining that which he has sagged for and is entitled to by the regulations of the service, and the strict injunctions of his employers at home.

If officers for regimental staff appointments (which are considered of minor importance, but

why so, I cannot say,) are obliged to be qualified in the languages before they hold either, why should those on the general staff be exempted therefrom? But such is the case in more instances than one. Be that however as it may; let a man be a linguist, or not; let him have all the interest in the world, or none at all; let him be steady, or a scamp; let him be married, or single; let him be old, or young; as long as he knows his duty and does it, it is quite sufficient; let him be a soldier in the true sense of the term, and that one qualification will cover a multitude of sins. A staff-officer, to be a proper one, must first of all be a soldier, an honour to his cloth and an ornament to his profession; and with such an one for his staff, a general officer, whatever his position, may, with confidence, trust him in the performance of any of the many important duties which may befall him; but, if he knows not his duty, he had better first learn it, and then undertake those for which he may hereafter, by the influence of his friends or the selection of his superiors and betters, be fortunate enough to obtain.

Early in the year 1838, the government deeming it prudent that the number of troops employed in the Tenasserim provinces should be increased, in consequence of an expected rupture with the Burmese, a brigade of two regiments, consisting of H. M. —rd foot, then stationed at Aroee, and

my own corps, were ordered to prepare for foreign service as an augmentation, sufficient in strength it was supposed for the holding in check the warlike spirit and hostile intentions so evidently gaining ground at the court of Ava. We accordingly received the "hooken" (order) to make all necessary arrangements preparatory to embarkation, the which I may as well state for the information of those not conversant with such matters, is a work of no small magnitude, though at the same time one of no difficulty, as I will prove hereafter.

The orders conveyed to us, were to the effect, that we were to get ready without delay, as it was intended that we were to sail in April; we were consequently very soon with our hands tolerably full of hard work, such as none of us from the commanding officer downwards had ever been accustomed to before. Added to this, there were many peculiar difficulties which tended not a little to render our situation for the time being one of trouble, to say nothing of vexation caused by a fidgetty senior who worried and perplexed us with his everlasting chits. However, the main thing to be looked to, and that of the greatest consequence, was the doing things according to regulations, and making the men and all parties concerned perfectly acquainted and satisfied with them.

In this we were particularly successful. Our interpreter made out a beautiful and perfectly in-

telligible translation of all the pay and pension rules connected with troops on foreign service, as also those for discipline and other matters while on board-ship; what each individual was to receive as rations during the voyage, and the provisions made for the support of the men's families during their three-years' separation from them; and, above all, a clear and distinct explanation relative to the pensions for the widows and heirs of such ranks as may die on foreign service.

All these most important points were repeatedly read and thoroughly explained to the men, and each individual soldier was made to understand every single item which interested him. There was not one point omitted, not one iota; the men knew all, and the consequences were, that everybody was perfectly acquainted with what he was to expect, how he was to fare, what he was to have, and what he was not to have, and what was to become of his family if by chance of war or any other cause he was to become a casualty. I do not think that we had a single instance of misunderstanding, and that being the case, everything was clear before us.

The incessant toil of writing out and preparing the family certificates; the constant applications for changing the nominated heirs; the trouble of inquiries to be made relative to the identity of individuals fixed upon by the men as holders of the said certificates; all these difficulties were indeed

very trying to any man's temper and patience; but it was nevertheless a satisfaction to know when all was ended, that we had done our duties correctly, and that above all, we had every reason to be pleased with the conduct of the men throughout, without exception, who behaved themselves from the commencement in the most praiseworthy, soldierlike and orderly manner possible.

I must here explain that a regiment of native infantry going on foreign service (which signifies quitting the continent of India for China for instance, or for the Straits' Settlements, the Tenasserim Provinces, or Aden, or Egypt,) are obliged to leave their families behind, they not being allowed to accompany the corps. In fact, it could not be done. The government are liberal in the extreme on these occasions, and readily make every arrangement in their power for the comfort and maintenance of the numerous host, which, as I before observed, is always attached to a native regiment.

Each soldier previously to his following his colours on such an occasion, or I ought to say always, is obliged to register his nominated heir in a book in the adjutant's office kept for that purpose. This record is corrected every quarter by a committee, giving the soldier an opportunity to make what alterations he may please, according to the current circumstances of life. The heirs thus nominated

are of two classes, and of a certain number, in order that in the event of the nominated heir dying, the next in succession becomes the one to derive the benefits of the arrangement. One class of heirs is for pension; and those entitled to pension are inserted in one column; while those for personal property (which compose the other class) are put down in another. The heir for the one can come in for the other, though that for property is not always entitled to be nominated for the pension.

This book, as above mentioned, is one of the greatest consequence to the interests of the soldiery, and consequently requires the greatest care and minutest supervision in being always kept complete and ready for reference. As casualties occur among the men, the nominated heirs benefit, accordingly; those for pension obtain the salary allowed by the regulations for their life-time only, it not being transferable from one to another, and ceasing immediately on the decease of the individual holding the certificate.

Those for property receive the net amount of the proceeds of sale of the dead man's kit, arrears of pay, and anything else appertaining to the estate. But previously to either heir being admitted to either benefit, the claimants have to be identified as being the bona fide person nominated by the defunct; and this is done by a committee of verifi-

cation, so that there cannot be any mistake as to the individual so claiming.

Now, as regards the family certificates, to be granted by the men. This is a capital arrangement, and one which tends greatly to the comfort of all parties. To that of the men, as enabling them to provide for the sustenance of those near and dear to them during their long absence; and to the families, as enabling them to have the whoremith-all to support themselves and their children while separated from their husbands, &c. &c.

The reader must kindly pardon my entering into these matters; but the fact is, I wish to point out, in doing so, how keenly alive our government is to the comforts of the native army, and how excellent are the provisions made for the accommodation and convenience of all parties. The soldier himself receives an increase to his monthly salary, and his family is taken every care of during his absence; and, if anything happens to him, one member of that family, at least, obtains a stipend for life of half the amount of the pay received by the soldier while alive. Can there be anything more handsome, or more liberal? In addition to this, he is enabled to transfer a moiety of his monthly pay, amounting to one half of the whole, to his family for their support, for the period of his being sundered from them in the performance of his duty.

The soldier is likewise allowed to make remittances free of expense, so that he is able to send his little savings, in addition to the amount already left them, through the medium of his family certificate. These are indeed great advantages, such as the most discontented cannot but approve of; and it is matter of great surprise to me, that instances of dissatisfaction should from time to time have taken place in various regiments in our army.

I will not, however, trouble the reader with any further detail in connection with the existing regulations; suffice to say, they are so explicit, and so easy of comprehension, that it is wonderful how any mistakes or misunderstandings should occur at all. But their occurring shows a lamentable deficiency in proper management, and a sad neglect of duty on the part of the officers, at all times reprehensible, but more particularly so where the interests of the men are so deeply concerned.

I think it a pity that acts of insubordination or discontent should ever show themselves on occasions of troops embarking for foreign service; but it seems to me that they arise chiefly from the circumstance of the men not knowing or understanding aught about the rules and regulations which principally allude to themselves and their families. If the common soldiers do not comprehend these particulars, it arises from two causes. Either the translations are not sufficiently explicit,

or the officers have not been at the trouble of making their men acquainted with their real purport.

I must say that I do not in any way blame the men for raising any questions, for where their rights are concerned, they are perfectly at liberty to endeavour to clear up by inquiry such doubts as may exist among them; and the officers are in duty bound to afford the poor fellows every requisite information; but, if such be withheld from them by carelessness, and a proper want of feeling for their interests, is it at all surprising that they will demur about embarking? Not at all.

Every case of downright refusal to embark has, invariably, been cleared up and satisfactorily arranged by means of a little quiet remonstrance and explanation; and the men have always gone on board contented. None so easily managed as the Madras sepoy, but he must be treated fairly, as every soldier should be treated. No! in nine cases out of ten, the blame is to be traced, not to the men, but to the officers, and that is a well known fact.

In making translations from any order, or rules, or, indeed, from anything, whatever it may be, for the purpose of their being promulgated among the native troops, interpreters, and more particularly young and inexperienced ones, are very apt to over do the thing, by making use of high-flown,

flowery language, which to an ignorant sepoy is nothing but a jargon of unintelligible phrases, perfectly beyond his comprehension. This mode of translation is, I fear, adopted in most cases more from vanity and carelessness than anything else. From vanity, to show off the acquirements of the translator to those who know aught of the language; and from carelessness, because he will not take the trouble to give the thing a thought beyond that the translation must be made; but whether it is understood or not by the men is another matter altogether.

The greatest care and attention are, in my opinion, requisite to render the original into plain, simple and idiomatical language, in order that the most illiterate soldier from the plough may be able to come to an understanding of the pith of the story. Terms and phrases should be adopted, and sentences turned into such as are commonly in use among them in their conversation and intercourse with each other, so that there cannot be a shadow of doubt as to what the translation is intended and meant to convey. The same in the colloquial part of the business. Young men are apt to talk big to their sepoys (that is, those who can talk at all), to show off their learning and capacity; but what is the use of that?

There is more harm than good in it. We may as well talk first-rate English to a waggoner or

shepherd at home ; not that he would understand a word of what we may say to either the one or the other. 'Tis a mistaken notion which some people have, to imagine that every one is as clever as themselves.

The language used in every respect should be adapted to the individual knowledge of those principally concerned. If the parties are well educated men, let the terms and sentences used be as showy and as poetical as the translator or speaker may feel inclined to adopt, and there can be no harm in it, for then it can be understood ; but, if they be ignorant and illiterate, then let the language employed be in accordance, so that they may derive the benefits and advantages which the one affords over the other.

I think it of the utmost importance that the officers of a regiment, from the senior down to the youngest ensign, should give their whole energies and attention to the necessary arrangements of preparing for foreign service. Personal supervision in composing the requisite documents, of which a great number have to be written, is a matter of most urgent attention, because the existence of a single error in any one paper, cannot be rectified without the greatest difficulty and trouble. The detection of such is always followed by sad inconvenience, and a consequent discontent to the parties immediately concerned, with every probability of

great pecuniary sacrifice to the negligent officer, who is obliged to make good all deficits originating from such errors.

A certain work is allotted to an officer in command of a company. It is always better, more convenient, more satisfactory, more creditable, that that work should be done by the officer himself; a great deal of trouble, time and expense are saved, and the officer doing the thing himself, he is able to know how matters stand, and to give necessary information on any point connected with his command; not so if he delegates that duty to another.

The advantages of personal superintendence are great. There cannot be a doubt of that. The men are satisfied that their officer does all in his power to forward their rights and comforts, and that he knows what he is about, while the officer congratulates himself with the certainty that all his labour is not in vain, and that he, at all events, has done his duty to his own satisfaction as well as that of his men.

Everything then goes smoothly on. The monthly stoppages are made in favour of the holders of family certificates; the latter receive their monthly stipends, whatever they may be, while the poor soldier, separated from his kith and kin, solaces himself with the assurance that his wife and children are provided for during his absence; he receives letters

from them, to that effect, from time to time; he is at ease; and he does his duty with cheerful alacrity and soldier-like fidelity; he looks upon his officer with confidence as a man who has his and his family's welfare at heart, and continues to jog on right merrily, until his period of three years expires, when he returns with his colours to his native land, to the bosom of his family, a happy, contented man. Those dear to him have been taken care of while he was away, and he is satisfied that he has been, and is serving a government which knows how to appreciate the value, and how to treat their faithful and brave soldiers.

But the disadvantages of neglecting such important matters, important to the well-being of everybody concerned, to say nothing of the credit of the regiment; the disadvantages, I say, of such dereliction of duty, are greater than the careless or the ignorant can conceive. Witness some of the disturbances in certain corps, in which the men have positively refused to go on board, openly avowing their determination not to do so until they were made aware of what they were to expect, declaring that they would not quit the shore, except every doubt and misunderstanding were cleared up, and they were made thoroughly acquainted with every rule and regulation which they knew to exist, but which had not been satisfactorily explained to them, stating, also, that they expected all the rights

and privileges, to which regiments going on foreign service were justly entitled, but which had not even been mentioned to them.

Such and other reasons have been alleged by the sepoya on these very distressing occasions, showing an unwillingness on their parts to embark, because they were aware that they had been neglected, but, at the same time, evincing a readiness to obey their superiors, with the proviso, that they should be dealt with as others had been before them. If officers did their duty, such things would never happen. The neglect, then, of that duty is the cause (not any spirit of insubordination on the part of the soldiery) which gives rise to the mutinies and disturbances alluded to.

What an immensity of vexation and annoyance, as well as of disgrace, would attention and zeal save to all parties! And how great the pleasure, when everything is conducted with that steadiness and regularity which betoken and are the true criterion of a well disciplined corps!

There cannot, in my humble opinion, be anything more easy than the preparing a regiment for foreign service. Every rule is so well and so clearly defined, that it is impossible to mistake, and there is such an ably laid train of orders that the road is clear, even to the most ignorant and inexperienced, that is to say, provided care and attention, so requisite for a proper performance of the

multiplicity of duties consequent thereon, are duly paid to the task, an onerous one, to be sure, since the comfort of so many is at stake upon the exertion of *one* individual, who has the management of the whole, and who, if he sees that each responsible officer properly performs his part, will have little or nothing to trouble him. The greatest exertions, however, are necessary on his part to make each person particularly attend to what is so essential, viz. the careful preparation of those important documents relating to family payments, as well as to the making his men know exactly every single order connected with each individual as regards the present as well as the future.

Again, the head of the corps has to be very particular that all numerical returns, and other papers connected with the quartermaster-general's department, for the shipping of the necessary provisions for the voyage for Rajhpoots, Hindoos, and Moslems, are correctly drawn out and prepared. These returns are made out, according to form, by the quartermaster, who obtains every information from company officers, and so on; any mistakes, in point of detail, are likely to be attended with serious results, but these are easily avoided by a little care and surveillance, and what difficulty can there be in that? The difficulty arises from a want of attention, and he who pays none to his duty is very much deficient in spirit and proper feeling, which

should always be a trait in the character of every officer and soldier.

Let each man perform his part according to rule, and let the whole be supervised by the head, and there cannot be an undertaking more free from difficulties than a duty of the nature I allude to. It stands to reason, that the more negligent a man is in the work he has to do, the longer he is about it, and the greater the probabilities of ill success: but look at the matter in another light; how delightful the undertaking, and how satisfactory the result! Let us, however, proceed to get the corps on board without any further delay. Much yet is to be done ere we can up anchor, and hoist our topsails to the breeze.

CHAPTER VII.

Disposition of Arms and Accoutrements—Water and Provisions—Grief of the Sepoys at parting with their Families—Confusion and Delay caused by their Presence at the Place of Embarkation—The March down to the Beach—Superfluity of Staff-Officers—Embarkation, and its Dangers—Lost Wail of the Multitude from the Shore—Arduous Duties of the Native Officer left in Charge behind—What becomes of the Men's Families.

Our arms and accoutrements were taken into the arsenal in the fort, and there carefully packed up in large chests and boxes. Our people were very loth to part with their firelocks, but they would have been in the way, and probably injured on the voyage. But the principal cause of their being put away is in compliance with a line of policy adopted by the government for being on the safe side, in case of any discontentment and consequent outbreak, while on board, among the native soldiery, which would render them a powerful enemy to deal with, possessed, as they would be, of their own weapons, but which the arrangement I have men-

tioned materially prevents, rendering the whole body on board perfectly harmless, and easily overpowered, should any disturbance actually take place. But, as this is merely a matter of surmise on my part, we will say no more on the subject.

The remaining stores, of all descriptions, were likewise similarly disposed of; in fact, everything was done that should have been done, and neither expense nor trouble spared to have all in proper order, ready for a landing in any part of the country, should it so happen that it would be necessary for us to do so. The troops had boat-cloaks and canteens served out to them, the former made up of stout cloth, and the latter large enough to hold a quart of water, for use on board ship.

Provisions and water were shipped in large quantities; and in this government were not in any way stinting, every article for culinary purposes having been abundantly supplied for daily consumption during the passage. The water-casks were filled by high caste Rajhpoots of another regiment, detached for that express duty; and in this, too, they are obliged to be exceedingly particular, because neither Hindoo nor Moslem will touch anything that has been defiled by other people; whereas, Rajhpoots and Brahmins, being considered by both sects as high caste men, are deemed quite unobjectionable, though a Moslem employed for the purpose will render the water as tainted, and, con-

sequently, unfit for the use of the Hindoo, while the sons of the Prophet have no such feelings of punctiliousness with regard to their brethren.

The families of the regiment are a source of much annoyance and worry to men as well as to officers. Private feelings for those who are about to be left behind, to be parted from, perhaps, for ever, upset the poor soldiers, who are sometimes so perplexed with anxiety of mind and distress, that they know not what they are doing; and then there are such crying and wailing in the lines, that nothing can be done with the people in the way of work, and we were frequently under the necessity of resorting to threats to stop their giving vent to their sorrow.

Women and children yelling and screeching created such a confusion that the officers had trouble enough to get on with their duty. The men were all strongly recommended to start their families off as soon as they possibly could to get them out of the way, and a day was fixed upon for every living camp-follower to leave the lines upon pain of severe censure. But this was of no avail; for, although they did obey orders and quitted the lines, still they lingered behind to have a last parting with their relatives, thereby making matters worse than they were. Do what we would, there was no getting rid of the old women. They stuck to the men like leeches; and what was to be done

we knew not. After all, it was natural enough too, and consequently not a matter to be wondered at, for, were we similarly situated ourselves, we should think it very hard to be kicked away from those near and dear to us, when, perhaps, we might be parting never to meet again.

However, all the reasonings and arguments in the world, all the threatenings and strict injunctions went for nothing, with our people; for there they were as numerous as ever, and the trouble they gave us was beyond conception. When at the place of embarkation, the noise and hubbub caused by the presence of women and children, old and young, big and little, all howling forth their lamentations, and imploring blessings from their deities upon the heads of their departing relations, were truly distressing, and the heart-rending shrieks and piercing cries of some of them, as their husbands, trying to smother their own feelings, leaped into the boats, and pushed off from the beach, were piteous in the extreme, and sufficient to unman the stoutest there present.

The crowding of these poor creatures on the beach caused much confusion highly objectionable in a military point of view. They interfered considerably with the movements of the corps, and impeded our embarkation so much that I ~~were~~ beginning to fear we should never get on board; as it was, I found great difficulty in preventing some

of the men from smuggling their children into the boats to take them on board with them.

I think, however, we were not worse off than other regiments, for, notwithstanding the disturbance and hubbub caused by these irregularities, the whole corps were remarkably well conducted and behaved in the most soldier-like manner; but many a gallant fellow did I see almost choking with emotion, trying all they could to conceal their feelings, and dashing the tear-drop as it forced its way, despite of their efforts to conceal it. Many, alas! parted from their dear ones never to meet again!

But the parting once over, and the men in the boats rowing off to the shrill music of the merry fife and the rattle of the drum, they took off their caps and shouted their war-cry of "Dheen! dheen!" until they made the neighbouring buildings ring again!

I never shall forget our march down to the beach that morning. The men were at intervals shouting, as if on purpose to keep down, or drive away, their own sorrows, and the lamentations of the thousands who followed them on either side of the road. The morning was a fine one, though the night had been stormy. The surf was, therefore, very high indeed, and it was at first feared that we should not be able to embark. We were covered with dust from

head to foot, and in a dreadful state by the time we reached the boats.

The band played away some spirit-stirring tunes which added to the excitement of the moment, and I felt as happy as possible at the thoughts of a trip to sea after our disagreeable sojourn at Vepery; added to which, we had the prospects of seeing some service, which contributed not a little to our delight. We reached the beach at about six o'clock, and there found H. M. —rd Foot, the regiment which was to accompany us, already on the point of embarking.

The two corps cheered each other loudly as we came up, and the soldiers and sepoy's shook hands as merrily as possible. The line having been formed and other arrangements made, we proceeded to apportion the men to the massulah boats, which were all drawn up on the beach with their crews ready for work.

The ships taken up by Government not being of sufficient size to enable the whole corps to go together, we were divided into two detachments. The head-quarters with five companies and followers having been apportioned to the N——, and the remaining three companies, under the senior officer, to the W—— W——, which was to sail about a week after us. These five companies then commenced embarking in regular order, fifteen rank and file

with their officers or non-commissioned officers, being the number allotted by order to each boat, As I before observed, the surf was very high. It was consequently considered hazardous to put more men in the boats than the number above mentioned; indeed there was just sufficient room for that detail without crowding.

There were staff-officers present to superintend the embarkation; a superfluity of them we thought, as they were very much in our way, and made more fuss than was necessary, by their troublesome orders and counter-orders; telling us to do one thing, and then the next moment another.

On this occasion, I again had an opportunity of remarking several irregularities, which I could enter into and comment upon, but to find fault with the wise arrangements of those in office may be considered a heinous crime, or give grave offence, particularly as my doing so may carry with it the semblance of impropriety in the opinions of those who are inclined to be touchy on these points; but be this as it may, I will not trouble my reader with an argumentative subject which will most likely be wearisome to them; suffice it to say, that there were several objections which, if they still exist, decidedly require to be rectified.

One thing, however, I will mention, as having come more particularly under my observation, and it is this: there happened to be a deficiency in the num-

ber of boats to admit of fifteen rank and file going at a time. This deficiency, it was said, could not be made good, and there was no time to allow the men being detained until other boats had returned from their first trip; the consequences were that more than the regulated number of men were ordered by one of the staff-officers to be crammed into one of the boats. This, considering the state of the surf, was very foolish, and the thing was objected to, not only by the subaltern officer proceeding in charge of the party, but by myself also.

However, no heed was taken of our remonstrance, and fifteen more men were added to those already allotted, making a total of upwards of thirty-five souls, including the crew, in our boat, causing it to be almost unmanageable. The officer in the boat remonstrated again, but was informed that he was to do as he was ordered, and to proceed at once without further delay. Of course, after this there was nothing more to be said, and the boat shoved off. I every instant expected to see it capsized by the violence of the waves, for at one moment it was almost perpendicular, and the next it came bump down upon the sand, throwing the poor men about like so many bales of cotton, and jerking them against each other most piteously.

This being probably the first time that many of them had been so situated, the sepoy's were not a little dismayed and confounded at such rough treat-

ment; and that added to their sea-sickness, with the anticipations of an immediate upset, rendered their position anything but pleasant, or enviable. The subaltern meanwhile, stood in the stern-sheets of the boat with arms folded, coolly awaiting the result of this truly dangerous experiment; a truly dangerous one it was, too; for, had the boat swamped or upset, the greater number of the sepoys would, in all probability, have been drowned, hampered up as they were with their clothing on and knapsacks slung.

I was certainly in a dreadful state of anxiety and suspense, for I had almost made up my mind that the boat could not possibly get over the surf with such a cargo of human beings in her; it was indeed too bad! How easily might this have been avoided! There were several boats which had not yet started, and the extra men might have been distributed among them without any inconvenience, instead of cramming them all into one; but the wise staff-officer thought otherwise, (or he did not think at all, which he should have done,) and ran the risk which more deliberate consideration would have dissuaded him from hazarding.

Fortunately, however, the massulah did clear the surf after all in safety, and I must say I never felt more relieved from intensely painful anxiety of mind than when I saw that the boat had arrived. When we knew that all was safe, (expecting as we

did that the result would have been a lamentable one,) the whole of the spectators gave one simultaneous shout of joy, while our gallant fellows in the boat returned it with a deafening huzza, which told us that they also felt that they had been relieved from a desperate situation.

Our old commanding officer was himself so excited that he stood on the beach waving his cap, and bawling most lustily, little heeding my adjutant-like efforts to keep him from being overtaken by the surf. There he stood, calling out most frantically, and moved not until a huge wave broke and covered him from head to foot, very nearly carrying him into the sea by the receding of the water. As it was, we had a difficulty in pulling him back. He got a thorough ducking for his obstinacy, and stood dripping with the briny element. But the best of the joke was, that he laid the whole blame upon my poor shoulders, and declared that I might have saved him from the wetting if I had liked.

"That young whelp of an adjutant of mine!" exclaimed he, as we tugged him out of the water, looking more like a half-drowned rat than a gallant field-officer of foot, "he stood staring about him instead of coming to save his commanding officer; but I'll pay him off one of these days."

But seriously speaking, our lads in that boat had a narrow escape. I never in my life witnessed

such a painful sight. I felt the anxiety the more since the gallant sub in it was my old chum of by-gone days, and my most intimate friend; while the men were those of my own company. The crew of the boat behaved remarkably well, and were amply rewarded by many of us for their good and expert management throughout; nothing but their skill could have saved them. What the feelings of others were I cannot conceive, but this I will say, that I would not have been in the shoes of the individual who had the cramming of the said boat, if any accident had actually happened.

The last batch that left were the commanding officer, his staff, with the colours and guard. For this purpose, there was an "*accommodation boat*," a vessel of a superior description, being painted outside with a salmon red-coloured paint, and the inside white, with cushions on the seats, an awning of canvass overhead, and the crews dressed in a kind of uniform; a degree better than those of the common boats, who are clad in native costume as *nearly* as they can be. We arrived at the beach I think at six o'clock, and, if I recollect rightly, the ship's bell struck *six* when the accommodation boat came alongside.

As we pushed off from the shore in the boat, we were greeted by a long and piercing shriek, or rather yell, from the numerous people assembled; the families of the men paying a last farewell to

the big man who had the interests and welfare of their relations in his hands; the shouting became more and more faint as the boat distanced the shore, many of them lingering behind to take a last look at us as we neared the ship.

Poor people! They were now forsaken as it were. But they had the consolation of knowing that though left to themselves, they were well provided for and taken care of. A corps going on foreign service has all the families located at one of the military cantonments in the neighbourhood of that part of the country from whence the generality of the men come, or at which station the greater portion of the family certificates are made payable; for instance, Trichinopoly, Vellore, Ellore, Masalipatam, or Vizagapatam.

The whole body of non-combatants, including Recruit and Pension Boy Establishment, already alluded to, (except a few of the grown up boys who are nearly fit for transfer to the ranks, and who have fathers or other relations in the regiment; these few are permitted to accompany the corps,) as also a few worn-out non-commissioned and privates are left behind. All these are placed under the orders of one of the older native officers, the one least likely to be serviceable at head-quarters, who has the superintendence of all parties, the management of the family certificates, the making necessary reports in all directions, (particularly to

the adjutant,) of all occurrences, be they good, bad, or indifferent; the drilling and educating of the boy establishments; the collecting and forwarding of all letters and parcels; the conducting and settling of all disputes; in fact, the entire controul of the whole, amounting to perhaps treble the number of souls to that of the corps itself.

This certainly is a responsible charge and an arduous undertaking for a period of three years, entailing anxiety of mind and bodily labour, as well as personal expense, for which the officer gets nothing extra in the shape of allowance; the only allowance being that to which a monkey is subjected, and which being too well known it is not necessary for me to mention. At all events, he gets plenty of grumbling, growling, and ill-will from the discontented and the many bad characters which throng the lines, to say nothing of vituperations, maledictions, jealousy, and revenge, which are invariably inveighed against him by the absent lords and masters of those very people who are misbehaving during their absence.

Government ought to allow these poor native officers some extra pay to compensate for all the trouble and expense to which they are put. They have more to do than people have any idea of; their situation is decidedly no sinecure, and they get no thanks whatever for their exertions.

Many irregularities go on among the families, which require the greatest vigilance and attention towards their being checked. Intrigues of all kinds, seduction, knavery, cheaterly, with regard to family certificates, quarrels and fights, elopements and infidelity, robberies and even murders, take place from time to time; these and many others too numerous for me to touch upon, are the objects of much solicitude to the unfortunate native officer in charge, and which render his situation by no means easy, or comfortable. His reports of such proceedings to regimental head-quarters are brought to the knowledge of those most concerned, who either believe, or affect to disbelieve the same, according to circumstances, but secretly awaiting their return to take such matters up, or immediately noticing them in the most summary manner possible, by making a disturbance in the regiment, the termination of which is too painful for me to enter upon, but which does not in any way tend to the advantage or benefit of the reporter.

I have known some distressing things take place amongst the families, which have rendered the situation of those in charge anything but enviable. I do think these poor men should be paid for the trouble they have to go through. But they have an immediate superior over them in the garrison or cantonment staff, to whom they are responsible for

the regularity and good conduct of their charge, and from whom they receive their orders, as well as pay, &c. &c.

These officials, however, have other more arduous duties to perform, exclusively of that of looking after old women and children; the families, consequently, are oftentimes very much neglected, being left for months to the entire controul of the superannuated native, who must be incapacitated for the satisfactory performance of his many duties, unless aided and supported by some one senior to himself; but such, unfortunately, is too often not the case; he seldom or ever sees the superior, to whom he is immediately responsible, save and except when he has some report to make, or at muster, or when he goes to draw the pay of his charge.

There is, consequently, no wholesome authority exercised over the family lines, no supervision of discipline for the controul of such a large number of beings, no check over their conduct, and little or no punishment; so that the authority or power of the native officer is considered as a perfect nonentity; scarcely any one obeys him; those who are well disposed jog quietly on, while the many bad characters carry on their malpractices with impunity.

The staff-officer should so arrange matters, I think, as to be able to make these people know that there is somebody to obey, and he ought so to

manage as to visit the lines once or twice a week ; to have appointed days for hearing and disposing of disputes, and other cases ; to see that the school-masters do their duty, in properly educating the boys ; to punish with a high hand, and with the utmost rigour of the law, all gross instances of misbehaviour, such as, after minute and patient investigation, he discovers to have really and truly occurred to the disgrace of the corps, and to the discomfort and misery of those absent from them.

Independently of these measures, every support should be afforded to the authority and situation of the native officer, and everything should be done that is necessary to uphold the respectability and well-being of all parties, so that the absent relatives may know that they are not overlooked, and that their comfort and happiness under such circumstances are not neglected, but that all depends upon whether their own behaviour be good, bad, or indifferent.

But I fear me that all this is seldom or ever looked to ; and that there is much wanting to be done to rectify and put into a proper train, such irregularities as I have alluded to ; bad enough are they in the occurring, but still worse in their being allowed to continue. More discontent and ill feeling are likely to arise in the ranks of a regiment on foreign service, from such things taking place amongst their families, and reaching their ears (as

of course they must), than any supposed hardship, or grievance.

The sepoys are very tenacious and jealous of the good name and fame of their wives and other female relatives, and nothing is more calculated to rouse their ire or revengeful feelings, than the being told that any of them have disgraced themselves by a light behaviour, such as the scandal-loving world attributes to them. All this, therefore, requires strict supervision, and the greatest watchfulness is necessary to prevent unfounded reports, or malicious stories, being conveyed by any means, direct or indirect, to the ears of the soldiery, as being most dangerous in its consequences.

The native officer in charge is not of himself able to regulate and keep in order such a number of souls; a wholesome and effective support is requisite, on the part of the staff of the station, so that no opening can be given, or opportunity afforded, to the absentees, to find fault or to give them the chance even of raising a doubt in their minds, regarding the state of affairs among those who are to them naturally objects of affection and solicitude.

This state of things has continued and does continue without any improvement, and will continue, too, until something happens to open the eyes and startle the ears of government, when, it is to be

hoped, that some fresh arrangements will be made to better the condition and promote the well-being of the families of their faithful troops, during the period of their absence in the performance of their duty.

CHAPTER VIII.

The Ship and its Arrangements—Her Accommodation for Troops—An Incident in the Dark—Sufferings of the Men from Sea Sickness—The Mode of Managing Native Troops—Rations and Cooking—Water and its Value—Midshipmen's Pranks with the regimental Stores.

THE gallant bark in which we had launched ourselves and followers on the waters of the mighty deep, was one of tolerable size, rather ancient withal, but strong and in good order, as well as a fast sailer. She was commanded by an excellent seaman, and had a capital crew of Europeans. We found her clean outside and in. The captain kept a first-rate table, and did everything in his power that was conducive to our comfort.

I forget now how many there were of our party altogether, but the ship was full from stem to stern, with little or no spare room for anybody. All the baggage was stowed away in the hold; the arm-

inquired who it was making such a noise; and, on being informed of the fact, that it was no less a personage than his adjutant, exclaimed, "Why, what a row you're making, man, I thought the old ship was on fire! How she is pitching!"

"Very well for you to talk of a row, major," said I; "but if you had put your finger into this trap of a cuddy-servant's mouth, or whoever he may be, and got the nip that I have just been favoured with, I think you would have roared as loudly as I did.

"But I am sorry to have roused you, major," continued I; "the fact is, you made me smoke too much on the poop, and I am now suffering the tortures of a thirst, to appease which I have been in quest of a drop of water, and instead of succeeding in my search, have contrived to poke my digits into this fellow's gaping mouth, for which he has given me ample proof that his masticators are none of the worst."

"I'll give you water, and brandy, too, if you will come in here," said the major; "I am sorry you did not knock at my door instead of wandering about in the dark; why, boy, you might have tumbled down one of those hatchways, and got your neck broken, instead of your fingers bitten."

I accepted the major's kind offer, and, going into his cabin, drank off a full bottle of delicious water!

Oh, how truly delightful is a draught of cold water when a man is devoured by thirst!

But to proceed. I am afraid I have got a little too far in advance; however, when the commanding officer's boat came alongside, we found the men already on board, in a miserable plight, from the effects of sea-sickness. The ship was pitching and rolling very much, so that their condition was not to be wondered at. The whole of both upper and lower decks was covered with men lying promiscuously in all directions, vomiting, and groaning, and moaning in the most distressing manner possible. 'Twas, indeed, a most piteous sight; but we thought the best way was not to interfere with them for awhile, and allow them to remain where they were until somewhat recovered from the nausea.

In the meantime, our active and intelligent quartermaster, with that *best* of quartermaster-sergeants, old M — C —, bustled about, and made the necessary arrangements for berthing the men below, knowing that the sooner they were got out of the way, and comfortably stowed, the sooner would they recover, and find their own places, and look about them. The men were, therefore, called down by sections, commehcing with our grenadiers, and their respective places assigned to them for the rest of the voyage.

Each man thus knew where he was to lay his

head, where to place his pack or bundle, and who he had on each side of him, so that no mistake could possibly occur to give rise to disputes or quarrels for the future. The officers, also, knew where the men could be found; the non-commissioned were posted at proper intervals, and the native officers had charge of all between decks, checked irregularities, saw that the men did not make any messes on the deck, and were held responsible that no smoking nor fire of any description was used below, under pain of severe punishment. There was a native officer on duty on deck, and another below; but of this hereafter.

I must say, that officers embarking with native troops have much to do (that is, if they do their duty) to conduce to the comfort of their men, as well as towards keeping up that strict discipline which should invariably prevail under every circumstance or situation in which they may be placed. The duties to be performed are multifarious, and, if properly performed, arduous, but yet easy in the extreme; because, as before observed, each item is so plainly defined, that, where any difficulty can exist, I cannot conceive.

But officers do raise difficulties, and look upon matters of duty (for which they are well paid!) as so many hardships which they have no right to undergo. They fancy that all they have to do is to draw their pay, leaving the most important parts of their pro-

session to be considered as of a secondary nature, to be performed by their non-commissioned officers, and thinking little or nothing about their men, excepting in what way they can best avoid coming in contact with them. As to what becomes of the sepoys, whether they are comfortable, or otherwise, whether they are well treated or ill, these are subjects with which they never trouble themselves; and, as long as they are not bothered or pestered by the "*black rascals*," they are all smiles and satisfaction, and care not how long it may be before they again cast eyes upon the ugly countenance of one of their soldiers!

Each individual officer, on board a transport, has some responsible duty to go through, exclusively of those immediately connected with his profession, and much care and circumspection are necessary to carry on such to the satisfaction of the men. The Madras sepoys are not hard to please. They are very soon contented; but any carelessness or disregard to their wants or comforts on board, are very apt to create serious disturbances.

It is, moreover, incumbent on the commanding officer himself personally to see that every attention is paid to the soldiery, more particularly as regards their provisions and water, their cooking, and their feeding, and all matters connected with their *castes*, carefully avoiding every interference with their own prejudices about the latter, and diligently superin-

tending the issue, distribution, dividing, and preparing of the former, patiently investigating and settling all complaints and disputes, avoiding, if possible, a frequency and necessity of the one, by checking even a semblance of the other.

All this can easily be done by seeing that the regulations are strictly attended to; that the necessary documents for the issue of rations, &c., are correctly prepared, which they can be by the quantity indented for tallying with the number of men for whom the rations are required. As I before said, the natives are very easily managed. There cannot, in my opinion, be a more tractable race of human beings. They will do anything that is wanted of them. They will undergo any privations and many annoyances. They are most patient under sufferings, and, above all, most devotedly attached to their officers; that is, to those who at any time show them kindness, and a regard to their many wants.

I say this with reference more particularly to their situation on board ship, which must be, in every respect, most trying to them. Sundered, as they are, from all they hold most dear; taken away from their own country, and proceeding to another totally foreign to them; placed in a ship for a period of several days, and having to live in a manner quite different to what they had ever before been accustomed, and being, during that

time, exposed to many personal inconveniences, and having to forego many of their habits and observances; all these drawbacks are against them, and tend to show what the sepoy will subject himself to, when duty calls. They also point out, in plain terms, the great necessity that exists, on the part of the European officers, to a faithful and zealous performance of their many duties towards conducting, as far as lies in their power, to the happiness, comfort, and consequent contentment of those very men who are following their colours, with cheerful alacrity, to their country's call, and who are ever ready to do the same whenever they receive the order to go anywhere, provided those officers give them that support and encouragement which their high situation, in connexion with their men, so justly demands.

As I have before remarked, the rations and cookery ought to be particularly attended to. With regard to the first, I must inform the reader that every necessary article for the culinary purposes of the men is regularly laid down in a scale. Each individual receiving so much of each ingredient per diem, upon indents furnished daily by company officers; viz., rice, so much; dall (split peas), so much; salt fish, so much; curry stuff, turmeric, chillies, salt, pepper; and again, tobacco, beetle-nut, &c. &c. in regular quantities; all these are liberally supplied, without any stinting.

The Rajpoots and Brahmins, who do not cook, or indulge in the above-mentioned luxuries, have *avull*, or n parched rice, flour, and sugar, served out to them; and, in rough weather, when there can be no cooking at all, these latter things are issued to the whole of the troops and followers on board, who are sometimes glad of a change. There is also plenty of firewood, which is served out in proper quantities for cooking.

The staff-non-commissioned, drummers, fifers, and band, have salt provisions and grog, as for European troops; in fact, there cannot possibly be any want; so far from such being the case, I must assure the reader that there is such an abundance of each of the articles I have enumerated, that whole boilers full of rice have been thrown overboard, or given to the pigs and poultry; and the men had such a quantity of tobacco, and other minor articles, that they did not know how to carry their bundles on shore, when we arrived at Moulmein. As far, then, as supplies were concerned, there was no lack, and there could exist no cause for grumbling.

Before such things are shipped, a committee of European officers assembles over them, for the purpose of examining and reporting upon their quantity and quality, as furnished by the contractors, so that there can be no mistake about either, every item being of the best description. All, then, that the

officers of the regiment have to do, is to see that every man has what he is justly entitled to, otherwise the chances are there will be disturbances. Jack Sepoy must have his rights, and does he not deserve them, too?

A word or two about the cooking will show the reader how that part of the business is contrived. There are always a certain number of "*cabooses*," or cooking-places, supplied according to the size of the ship, or the number of troops on board. We had, I think, six of these appendages, three for the Hindoos on the larboard side, and three for the Moslems on the starboard; the Christians, Parriahs, and other low-caste men, were cooked for by the Moslems. In addition to these "*cabooses*," or cooking galleys, there were huge cauldrons, with ladles, &c. for boiling the rice, as also small utensils for making curries, as well as stones, with pestles for grinding the carry stuff, &c. and making chatney, and so forth.

These culinary utensils, &c. are served out to the cooks, who are held responsible for their safe keeping, as well as for the cleanliness and preservation of the "*cabooses*." Sentries are posted over them to guard against fires, (which are invariably put out at *retreat-beating*,) as well as to prevent those who have no business there to come near, or to touch them. This latter arrangement is on account of the prejudices of caste, the natives having a par-

ticular objection to anything connected with their eating or drinking being defiled by unworthy persons.

It used to be an amusing sight to see our fellows enacting the cook, a calling to which they were not much accustomed, at all events not to cooking on board ship. Each party had a head man, (havildar or naigue,) who superintended the whole, and truly ludicrous was it to watch the dignitary presiding over the destinies of large cauldrons of rice, and sundry pots of curry; giving his orders, and abusing those under him, while they laboured and toiled at their duties, which were by no means easy, because of the enormous utensils used in preparing the food, the motion of the ship, and the great heat of the fires, as well as that of the mid-day sun. The rice cauldrons themselves, when filled with boiled rice, required so many as four men to lift them off and on the fire, which operation was performed by means of a brace of handspikes passed through two rings, made for that purpose.

Then there would be two fellows on the look-out with cans or buckets of water, pouring it, at intervals, over the roofs and down the sides of the galleys, to guard against accidents, during which important observance, some sly rogue would, as if by accident, contrive to let some of the water trickle down upon the back of the head cook or superintendent, for which he would obtain a shower

of anathemas, inveighed against his unfortunate head, with such volubility, and accompanied with such a variety of strange gestures, that one could not help laughing at the expense of the enraged and infuriated Jack-in-office.

At times, when the sea was at all rough, and there was, consequently, more motion than was pleasant, it became quite amusing to watch the cooks at work. I really used to wonder that no accidents ever happened. Once or twice a sea, a playfully inclined sea, would pay the waist a visit over the bulwarks, and give the fellows employed a briny sprinkling, much to their delight, and to the annoyance of the head men. Sometimes, the fire would be put out, and then there would be such a row, and such a bobbery; the head cook would begin abusing the sea, while his posse would be wrangling with each other most furiously; meantime, the younger soldiers, who were doing nothing, would sit on the booms and hammock-nettings, laughing away at the expense of the "*bancûrchees*" (cooks), who would turn upon them, ladles in hand, and send the scamps scampering away.

Brahmins and Rajhpoots not cooking, prepare their food with plain water. The flour and sugar they mix into a kind of mash, and eat it without even warming it on the fire. The *avûll*, or parched rice, they eat, either by itself, or with sugar—meagre fare indeed, but with which they

are apparently well satisfied. When one comes to consider that the generality of Brahmins, Purdasees, and Rajhipoots live upon the common vetch called "*chenna*," (with which the horses are fed,) for months and months, and which costs them about two rupees each month, their diet on board ship would appear the acme of luxurious living. I am only surprised that this class of men are so athletic, and thrive so well as they do.

In serving out the food, after its having been cooked, each man comes and receives his own by rank; that is to say, the commissioned officers first, and then the non-commissioned, and so forth. Those of the lower *castes* come last of all; and the remains are kept until evening, when the whole is warmed up for a kind of supper; what is then left is preserved till the morning, when those who like can warm up the cold rice, or make themselves *chap-paties*, or flat cakes, which, with the aid of a small curry, make the men a capital breakfast. There is no lack. The men can be eating all day, and yet there would be plenty, and to spare.

Our sepoy's do not mess together. Their eating and drinking are left to themselves. Some of them however do club together, and make what arrangements they please. I do not myself approve of messes amongst natives, though I have heard many people say that such could easily be established.

I maintain that the thing would be a failure, for many reasons, one of which is, that the men would never be brought to agree to it, and another, there would be constant bickerings and quarrellings, which would give rise to more mischief and trouble than can possibly be conceived; so we will say no more on the subject, but proceed to a few words relating to the water, which is an important item of expenditure, and requiring particular attention in its distribution.

Before embarking, each man has a tin canteen or jug served out to him, sufficiently large to contain the supply given him for the day's consumption. In addition to that issued for drinking, so many gallons are served out for cooking purposes; the "*bawürchees*" receive and are responsible for the same, for if any is wasted or otherwise made away with, then the deficiency is discovered when the rice comes to be boiled, so that the greatest care is necessary to prevent purloining.

The water is given out every morning under the superintendence of the European officer of the day. The duty is an unpleasant one, inasmuch as that the place where the water is kept being in the ship's hold, the heat is insufferable, and that added to the filthy state of such localities, renders a visit to those regions of darkness by no means delightful. However, the duty must be done, and

that most attentively, too. The way we managed was as follows.

The tin canteens of sections were collected by their respective non-commissioned in bundles by *castes*, and tied together; those of the Hindoos by themselves, those of the Moslems by themselves, and those of the minor castes by themselves. The water was pumped out of the butts, and the cans filled by Hindoos detailed daily; the Moslem will drink water touched by the Hindoo, but the Hindoo objects to drink that touched by the Moslem. When one section or squad was served, another bundle of cans were filled and handed up, and so on. A separate company began receiving water each succeeding day, so that those who got their's first to day, for instance, were helped last the day following.

It was requisite that the officer employed on this duty should be on the alert; and for this reason. Water being a scarce article on board, was, of course, in much requisition, and the men of all ranks resorted to all manner of means to procure it, bringing into play all the active cunning and roguery of the Indian to obtain an extra quantity, if he could not by cajoling those who superintended the serving it out, by stealthily thrusting in his canteen a second time.

I one day detected a native officer playing the trick, by sending his jug after he had got his full

share, and declaring he had not received any. I put him in arrest in a moment, and he only escaped a court-martial by humble contrition and previous good character; but he was severely punished for so grave an offence, and the notice taken of it completely put a stop to similar proceedings. Such acts of roguery merit the utmost rigour of the law, and should not be overlooked or tolerated; and an officer guilty of such conduct should be most summarily dealt with. That hoary old rogue should properly speaking have been turned out of the service for setting so bad an example to those under him, but he was most fortunate in escaping.

If the officer on duty keeps a kind of tally on paper, merely marking down the number of canteens handed for filling, there can be no difficulty in detecting rascality and checking the same; the strength of each company is known, and the rest is easily done. The water for cooking is served out last. There is a certain quantity allowed daily for all the people on board, that is, a certain number of casks. It sometimes happened that, after all the canteens had been filled, and each man had had his share, a few gallons would be over; in which case, it was fairly divided and handed out to the men in the evening.

I must just mention, by way of anecdote, a laughable occurrence which took place the first day water was served out after our quitting Madras.

The men had their water given them in the manner I have mentioned, and all appeared highly satisfied and pleased. Immediately after receiving the same, as many of them as could do so, mounted the hammock-nettings and commenced washing and cleaning themselves with that which it was intended they should drink. Poor fellows, they knew no better, but were not prevented by any of the officers, as it was intended to serve them as a lesson to be more careful of that precious element in future. In the course of the day, exactly as we expected, the native adjutant came up to me and reported that the men had had no water to drink.

"No water to drink?" exclaimed I, "why, what has become of that served out to them this morning?"

"Oh! sir," said he, "we have used that for washing."

"Indeed," answered I. "You have all of you made a decided mistake. The water given you is intended to be drunk; there is a plentiful and never-failing supply for washing over the ship's side, which is always procurable by drawing; do you understand me?"

"Yes, sir," answered the jemadar, "but the men have ignorantly expended all their drinking-water, can they not have any more to day? We shall know better in future."

"Not one drop more to day, my good fellow,"

said I. "Let it be a warning to you all to be more careful for the rest of the voyage of such precious stuff. Whoever heard of soldiers on board a transport washing themselves with fresh water?"

"Very good, sir," replied the soldier, and left me evidently much disappointed. However, I was not going to allow the men to be without a draught of water for the whole day, so very quietly mentioned the circumstance to the commanding officer, who issued a strict order prohibiting the use of water for the purposes of washing, &c. &c., as it was intended for drink. In the evening, to the delight and pleasure of all, the drum was beat, and the word passed for canteens to be collected a second time that day for a fresh supply of water, which was duly served out to the men, much to their satisfaction of course, but they never washed again in any other than what the sea afforded them.

The Rajhpoots and Brahmins had water given them separately from the rest of their comrades. A *scuttle-butt* was handed over to them for their own special use, and this was hoisted up from the hold and lashed in a convenient place on deck. The precious butt was an object of the deepest interest and care among those concerned. A sentry, one of their own caste, was posted over it in order to guard against defilement. When emptied, the

butt was replenished, but in strict conformity with rules as regarded quantity per diem.

This arrangement effectually prevented clashing or disputes among the men, though many were the amusing scenes we witnessed when any of the crew in the performance of their duty would unthinkingly place his unhallowed feet upon the sacred receptacle for water. What shouting there would be! What angry looks! And how coolly would the ignorant sailor take the matter, hitch up his trousers, turn his quid, and tell the sepoys to go to a certain warm place which I will not mention.

But the ship's crew and our men pulled capitally together, as I can vouch for. Our sepoys were ever ready to assist them in the duties of the ship, and they invariably did all they could to please their dusk-visaged passengers. It is to me a delightful thing to see the European and the Indian together,—when the former looks upon the latter with friendly feeling,—when we see the blinded prejudices of ignorance overcome by the more generous and nobler feelings of the heart,—when man, whatever his colour, deals with his fellow-creature as he should do,—when the skin is considered as nothing,—and when the brave, but too frequently despised, soldiers of the soil are treated by their conquerors as becomes a great and powerful nation, such as it has pleased God to make us rulers over.

We owe the safety of our vast Indian possessions to the loyalty and bravery of the native soldiers, and it behoves us to treat them in a manner best calculated to win their esteem and fidelity; and in no circumstances should we be more keenly alive to their wants and comforts than when on board ship, a situation fraught with many drawbacks and discomforts, to which they are so totally unaccustomed. Let, then, the European officer look to his men, and he may depend on it that he will never have cause for regret at his having done so.

Among the large quantity of baggage and other things sent on board were all our mess-supplies and establishment. In consequence of the scarcity of the good things of life at the place whither we were bound, we took with us stores of wines, and beer, and other requisites; and all these put together occupied a considerable space in the hold of the ship, and were stowed away in what we considered a safe place. When I say a safe place, I mean such a locality as would preclude the necessity of precautionary measures being adopted for their security, against the casks of wine being tapped, or the chests opened, and the bottles purloined. But in this we were very much disappointed. We had flattered ourselves that our supplies were in good keeping under hatches, with the keys of them in the charge of the chief-mate. We discovered when too late that we had been labouring under

the delusion of an honest and confiding imagination, as I shall presently show.

Our worthy friends of the midshipmen's mess were always mightily civil to us, and frequently asked us to take a glass of grog in their den of a berth. Such civility of course we could not out of courtesy refuse, and some of us would occasionally dive down to the lower regions for the purpose of imbibing their favourite beverage.

At the early part of the voyage, our friends treated us with some abominable trash in the shape of English brandy, and gin, more resembling turpentine than real Hollands: but after we had been to sea, we were agreeably surprised at having much better of both descriptions of spirits than hitherto, but what was more, we discovered a most palpable similarity in our drink to our own brandy and gin!

The midshipmites, on being asked where such excellent spirits had been procured, very coolly replied that their mess-supplies had been got from our mess-agents (and so they were certainly), and that their best had been reserved for their friends on their becoming better acquainted! What will the readers say when I tell them that on our unpacking and examining our stores after landing, we discovered sundry dozens of brandy, gin, and beer, sherry, madeira, and port; champagne, hock, and claret; jams, jellies, and other preserves; hermeti-

cally sealed provisions, and many sundries, *winks*, and wanting?

So the murder was out ; the middies had helped themselves to their heart's content, and we had ourselves helped them too in demolishing our own goods, little dreaming at the time we were doing so of the trick thus played off upon us, and that the *Jacks* had got the blind side of us *sodgers*, while we were all along fancying that our goods were safe and snug, and that our hosts were treating us with hospitality and civility, while the young villains were bumbagging us and wasting our substance undetected and unpunished, and we ourselves unwittingly helping, aiding and abetting as it were in robbing our own pockets, and encouraging them by our ignorance to continue their depredations until the end of the voyage, and then certainly they did leave off.

It was a capital trick, so thought the midshipmites ; and I dare say that if any of them see this narrative of it, they will recollect the circumstance, and call to mind the laugh which they must have indulged in when the "soldier officers" quitted the ship at Moulmein !

CHAPTER IX.

Termination of the Voyage—Arrival at Amherst—Mismanagement of the Pilots—Danger and Hardships of the British Troops in Landing—Deplorable condition of the Officer's Ladies and their Families—Arrival and Debarkation at Moulmein—Condition of the Troops on Landing—Want of Preparation for their Reception—Men's Lines and Officers' Quarters—The Monsoon.

I HAVE now, I think, fairly introduced my reader into all the interior economy of the management of native troops on board a ship; I have shown how they are berthed, how fed, and how they ought to be treated; and I know I am not far wrong in saying, that the work is not one of difficulty, though it may be one of magnitude; for where there are so many to please and attend to, are required much circumspection and care, as well as zeal, to perform it satisfactorily. Still I say the work is easy of accomplishment without doubt. The machinery cannot perform its functions without the aid of the steam which sets it in motion, and that steam cannot

be engendered without the aid of the water from whence it arises, and the fire which causes it to boil; so is it in the management of a body of men, who cannot possibly be ruled without the regulations which enforce their discipline; and those can never be properly carried into effect unless supervised and directed by the activity, the zeal, the spirit, of the commanding officer of the whole.

We had a very pleasant passage, altogether. Our men enjoyed the novelty exceedingly, for, when the nausea caused by sea-sickness had subsided, the gallant fellows entered into all the various ways of ship-board, accommodating themselves with good will to the inconveniencies of being between decks; keeping watch and assisting the sailors in their duties with good-humoured alacrity, and doing everything they were from time to time called upon to perform with implicit obedience.

We had only one case of misbehaviour, and that, considering the circumstances which caused it, was one arising more from bad temper on the part of the individual than any act of insubordination. He was however very soon disposed of, by being placed on the poop for the rest of the voyage, and subsequently discharged by sentence of a court-martial.

Acts of misconduct at sea should be taken up with a high hand and with determination; but fortunately with us we had every reason to be satisfied

with the conduct of our men, who seemed to vie with each other in endeavouring to please their officers. We had drills and inspections at regular periods. The men were kept strict in everything connected with their calling. There was no relaxation in point of discipline; the soldier was made to remember that he was still one, and the various regulations and orders regarding all matters appertaining to the soldier, were constantly brought to their recollection, while the minor details of duty were rigidly adhered to, and kept up with the same attention as if on shore.

Thus our trip passed happily away. We had many an amusing occurrence on board among the sepoys, who often exhibited instances of griffinish ignorance, to the no small delight of the crew, who enjoyed the fun exceedingly, and joked "Jack Sepoy" upon his not having his sea legs, or upon his want of agility in going up the rigging. We passed the Andaman Islands on our starboard bow, sailing pretty close to the principal one, and at last arrived in safety off Amherst, the entrance to the river leading up to our destined port.

On the day we came in to Amherst, the head quarters ship of the ——rd regiment arrived also; she was an enormous old East India-man, and made us, an 800 ton ship, appear like a cockle shell alongside of her. Two other ships were also in the offing when we brought to; they proved to

be the other transports with the remaining detachments of the two regiments, so that we had all arrived together. The smaller craft went straight up to Moulmein, while the larger ships were obliged to remain until the tide served to take us up also; indeed the East Indiaman above mentioned could not proceed at all, in consequence of her great draught of water.

The approach to Amherst is very pretty indeed. There is a small island opposite the entrance of the river, presenting a barrier, as it were; while a ledge of rocks runs half way across from the shore, rendering the approach somewhat difficult and dangerous, more particularly to ships of any size, such as ours were. Pilots are stationed at Amherst for the purposes required, and on our arriving the usual signals were made for one of them to take charge of our ship.

No attention was, however, paid to our guns; we arrived in the evening, and the pilots were too reluctant to quit home, or probably they were unable to do so for reasons I will not mention; however, no one came, so our skipper was obliged to anchor outside all night, and, as no one came to him next afternoon, he took his ship to her anchor-age himself, which he did by bearing down upon the shipping already there, a task of no easy accomplishment, from the circumstances already mentioned.

We anchored about a cable's length from the B——y, the name of the Indiaman. The troops on board her had already commenced disembarking, boats having come alongside in large numbers to take the men, followers and baggage up to Moulmein. And here a most glaring and culpable instance of carelessness and mismanagement took place, which I cannot help recording, not only to show the great folly of the thing, but to point out how cautious an officer in command of troops should be in regard to the safety and comfort of his men in every and such like situations.

Very soon after we anchored, the tide began to ebb, and whoever has been at that place will agree with me, that the water runs out with the greatest velocity. Such being the case, it is almost an impossibility to contend against the rush of water, either with sail or with oar. This the commanding officer on board the B——y did not seem to be aware of, and the pilot did not seem to care for.

All this latter personage appeared to wish to do was to get the men out of the ship as fast as possible, probably to show the queen's officers what a smart kind of a fellow he was (for I must mention that the individual I allude to had a no mean opinion of himself, and was not only pilot, but a civil officer at Amherst,—how he got his berth I know not), and how well he was acquainted with the conduct of such operations as those of disembarking.

barking a body of soldiers; while the commanding officer most unaccountably acquiesced in the man's arrangements, without even attempting to check his mad proceedings of sending the men over the ship's side with such a tide-way against them, and the consequent certainty of the boats containing them being swept out to sea, staring him in the face.

We, on board the N——, sat on the poop smoking our cigars, and watching these proceedings in silent astonishment, wondering what could induce the colonel of that regiment to allow such things to go on. Meanwhile, the boats were filled with men in their full dress coats and chacos, their knapsacks slung, &c. &c., each detachment being taken charge of by an officer, in his smart red jacket, white trousers and so forth, little dreaming that the costume he had so foolishly adopted was probably the worst for the duty on which he was sent.

This duty was to land his men at a place thirty-five miles up a river, the current of which was running out at the rate of some fifteen knots an hour, with a tremendous monsoon threatening overhead, and last, though not least, in vessels affording no shelter from the pitiless pelting of a Moulmein rain, which very soon came upon them all in torrents sufficient to change their gay turn out into soaking misery.

Each boat on being filled pushed off, and instantly

dropped astern in spite of the manly exertions of their crews, who pulled lustily at their oars, and yelled themselves almost into fits in their vain endeavours to make head-way against the tide. The result was as we had anticipated. Every boat drifted with the force of the tide with fearful velocity nearly out to sea, and, to avoid going further, the serangs, or coxswains, of the boats cast their anchors to await the turn of the tide, and no doubt cursing the folly of the consummate ass who had placed them in such jeopardy.

The unfortunate soldiery, meanwhile, got thoroughly drenched to the skin, without any covering, save a miserably leaky tarpaulin to keep out the heavy wet; having nothing in the shape of water or any other creature comfort to make up for the exposure, save the drippings from off their dirty covering; nothing except the dull monotony of anticipation, affording but little to cheer them in their trying situation, tossed, as they must have been, up and down; crowded in a wretched gun-boat for a length of time, sufficient to test the patience of a saint, and with the prospect of being swept out to sea should their cable part, as there was every probability of its doing, considering the weight it had to hold, and the force of the tide.

An attempt was made to reach the ship, but failed, as a matter of course, and all communication ceased for the time, so that nothing could be done

to relieve the men from their too truly perilous situation. The mischief was done, and it was fortunate matters did not terminate worse than they did. Had those boats been swept out to sea, not a soul would ever have got on shore alive. Poor fellows! What a wretched night must they have spent; and what a situation to be placed in, entirely by the self-conceit and stupidity of a chuckle-headed pilot, added to the extraordinary want of foresight of the senior officer.

The rain seemed to pour down in greater abundance than ever. How it did rain! And what a precious ducking did the poor wretch of an officer in his gay clothing get that blessed evening! Rather they than I! We in the meantime were comfortably snug under cover, not at all envying our less fortunate comrades in the boats, who had thus been sent adrift in such a night without the least necessity. I would not have had my own men placed in such a predicament on any consideration.

But regarding this mismanagement in a serious light, was it not a glaring pity that the lives of so many brave men (to say nothing of their wives and families) should have been hazarded to gratify the culpable folly of a mad-brained individual, coupled with the hasty zeal and, at the same time, blinded ignorance of him who commanded? If I remember right, few, if any, of the boats reached

Moulmein earlier than the afternoon of the day following; thus were the soldiers and followers exposed to the wet and damp during the whole night, and for a space of upwards of twenty-four hours, thereby rendering them liable to disease and death. How easily might all this have been avoided! Alas, alas! that such things should happen.

In the course of the day on which we arrived at Amherst, towards the evening, a pilot boarded us, saying that he had come to take the ship up to Moulmein, at the turn of the tide. He was a fat over-fed European, a first-rate vulgarian, and evidently possessed of a no small fund of what is termed a good opinion of himself, to say nothing of impudence. He swaggered into the cuddy, where we all were at our wine; talked loud, murdering King's English most distressingly, and addressed some of us in a tone of familiarity, as if he had known us for years.

This man was with us a couple of days altogether, that is, the whole of that afternoon and the next day, when we arrived at Moulmein. At meals, he proved himself a capital trencher-man. This I can vouch for, as he sate next to me at table, and I saw him demolish a whole baked sheep's head with the *garniture*, in an incredible short space of time. We will make no allusions to the oceans of

beer, wine, and brandy pawncy, which passed down his capacious throat.

This individual came on board and took charge of the ship, declaring his intentions to up anchor as soon as possible. In this he was not at all expeditious, for, after all his talking, we did not get under weigh until the next morning, when we ran up the river in tolerable style, though not without the greatest difficulty. I must here observe, that the Salween river is a particularly winding one, and full of shoals and sand-banks, which are constantly shifting; the navigation, therefore, is one of no easy accomplishment, requiring the greatest care and attention, particularly with vessels of much draft of water, such as our own.

The sagacious and accomplished individual alluded to, however, affected to think little or nothing of the duty upon which he was employed, and treated the business with the utmost unconcern, walking about the ship with a long cheroot in his mouth, which he was constantly lighting, calling out to his servant (for he had brought one with him) to fetch him this and that, and swilling brandy and water to an extent which perfectly astonished me! How the man kept sober I cannot imagine; as it was, I looked upon him to be in a state completely unfitted to do his duty, and how he got the ship up in safety was a mystery to me.

We frequently rubbed against the sand-banks,

and at one time were within an ace of sticking altogether. The captain, however, saved us from such an occurrence, by anchoring immediately, allowing the ship to swing round clear of the danger, and then heaving up again, which latter part of the business was done by the men of our regiment, who clapped on the capstan and worked the anchor up to the very hawse hole in a trice; we thus escaped a stick in the mud, where we should have had to remain for some days, but it fortunately turned out otherwise.

The expert cause of this expert mishap, during the operations consequent thereon, made a great noise, holloeing to the crew, and "star-boarded" and "ported away," until he was hoarse with bawling. The exertion, the heat, and the already excited condition of his brain, caused an additional demand for something to moisten his clay withal, and when we at length brought to at the anchorage, off the commissioners' wharf, at Moulmein, our friend was most decidedly not over and above what men call sober.

We anchored at Moulmein sometime between two and three in the afternoon, and immediately began disembarking. On our way up the river, we passed many of the boats containing our unfortunate brethren in arms, of H. M. —rd, looking more like drowned rats than British soldiers. I do not remember having ever, before or since, seen

men look so truly miserable. They had had little or nothing to eat since quitting the transport, and as for beverage they had nothing stronger, as I before said, than dirty water, distilled from an old tarpaulin.

Some of the boats contained the families of the officers. There they were, ladies and children; ayahs and matey boys; dogs, cats, and parrots; boxes and bundles; all huddled together, and presenting a medley of cold, and wet and discomfort; a sight truly pitiable, and one which, I hope, I may never witness again.

The poor ladies were certainly objects of commiseration. Clothes wet and damp, bonnets squashed, shoes saturated, hair out of order, and collars and shawls crumpled into all shapes and forms, sitting crowded on narrow seats, with barely room overhead; children squalling and restless from want of food, and discomfort, and having to undergo such hardships for upwards of two days! Really my heart bled for them!

On landing at the wharf, we were saluted by a tremendous shower of rain, by way of welcome to the Tenasserim Provinces. After we had got thoroughly wet, the men were marched off by companies, to a place about two and a half miles away, where tents had been ready pitched for their accommodation, while the officers were left to find shelter for themselves wherever they best could. The

way up to our new cantonments led through a long street, composed entirely of Burmese houses, so very different in construction and material to those of India, that we were taken by surprise; the appearance and dress of the natives, men and women, also attracted attention, and we could not help observing the fine make and looks of the former, and the handsome tasteful character of the latter.

The natives of Moulmein, and indeed those of the whole country, are a stout muscular race of men, of fair complexion, and, in many instances, of handsome countenances. The women are generally good looking, clean and well dressed in silks and muslins, the manufacture of the country; but I will not trouble the reader, at present, on these points, deferring doing so to another period hereafter.

Our situation on landing was anything but agreeable or pleasant,—I mean that of the men, and a few of the officers. Let the reader picture to himself a whole regiment of infantry, with all its stores, and other appurtenances to boot, encamped on a piece of ground barely clear of brushwood and jungle, the rain pouring down in heavy torrents, and no covering overhead save that of the tents, which very soon get saturated and admit the water, which falls on them most copiously; such being the case, our poor fellows were very soon wet through, and obliged to remain so for a length of

time, getting dry whenever the sun came out, and drenched again as soon as a fresh shower fell.

The men's kits, arms, and accoutrements, all our baggage and mess stores, in fact everything we brought out with us, were likewise exposed, and had to undergo the same aquatic ordeal as ourselves. There were no barracks, no store-rooms, no lines, no nothing ready for our reception. The former had been commenced certainly, and the workmen had but just begun roofing them, which I must inform the reader is but the primary stage of all buildings in *that* country; but as for lines, there was not even a vestige of a hut, or any signs of ground cleared away for erecting them upon.

Of quarters for officers there were a few posts stuck in the ground, which however gave us the consoling thought that such would be provided for us sooner or later. These of us who got no quarters in the old cantonments, were obliged to eke it out as well as they could, by taking shelter under the verandahs of the erecting barracks, without any screen excepting that of *tatties* and tent walls, affording them but scanty protection from the rain or sun, to which they were exposed, with but little prospect of bettering their condition for some time to come.

Many of us, however, were kindly accommodated in the old cantonments, where we found old

friends and a hearty welcome; but the rest had but a dull time of it, not seeing anybody from one end of the day to the other, with no mess to go to for their meals, and no provisions excepting such as could be procured from the bazaar close by, and cooked by their own servants.

This, reader, was our situation, and a pretty commencement it was too as an earnest of the future. The European regiment which had come with us was not a bit better off than ourselves. There were no barracks, nor accommodations for them either, except the shells of sundry unfinished buildings and tents. This brigade being an augmentation to the force already at Moulmein, there was of course no room for the new comers in the old cantonments.

New ones had therefore to be formed, and two delightful spots on high, dry, rising ground, were selected for locating us, at convenient distances, sufficient to keep the Europeans and natives apart, but near enough to admit of the one corps forming a junction with the other, should occasion require it. The spot selected for us had a beautiful view of the whole river, and was well calculated in every respect for a strong position for troops. We certainly had the advantage in point of situation over the whole of the force; particularly over those in the old station, which was low and surrounded by

a dilapidated embankment, or rampart, into the dry ditch of which all the filth and dirt of the place used to be deposited.

However advantageous the position that had been allotted to us, we were nevertheless not a whit better off in point of accommodation under which to shelter ourselves, except in the manner I have described; and if it had not been for the honour of the thing, (as the Irishman said,) we might as well have been out in the open air for all the comfort we derived from what little we had; bad was the best: and it was a great pity so many men (leave alone the officers) should have been thrown into a place, (arriving as they did in a foreign climate peculiarly trying to the native soldiery,) and left exposed to the rain, without any previous preparations having been made for their reception.

I believe the authorities at Moulmein had but just heard that an augmentation was to take place, when the ships bringing the troops made their appearance off Amherst. There was no alternative but to grin and bear it, and I must do our sepoy's the credit and justice to say, that not a soul grumbled or found fault, nor was there one instance of irregularity, nor even one punishment for the slightest fault. So far so good. Poor Jack Sepoy is indeed a proper manly fellow, whatever others may think or say to the contrary.

Our gallant men were not however left for any

considerable time in this truly miserable condition. We received every assistance from the civil authorities, who had the constructing of the public buildings then erecting for us. In about a week's time the main building, or "place of arms," was sufficiently completed to admit the greater part of the corps under its shelter; the mess-house, and one large bungalow were also completed, so that some of the officers, at all events, had covering to go into, not only to sleep and for their baggage, but to take their meals in with some degree of comfort.

In the course of a few days more, a considerable piece of ground was nicely cleared away, and regular lines marked out and commenced upon for the hutting of our men. Government were very liberal indeed. The public quarters for the officers and lines for the men were granted to us free of expense, so that after all, maugre the discomfort in which we were on our first arrival, we very soon contrived to get nicely settled in our newly-constructed abodes, and the whole station assumed a very military, cleanly appearance, much to the satisfaction of the authorities of the place, who made a very favourable report upon the conduct of the regiment during the trying circumstances in which they had recently been situated.

The men's huts were constructed regularly and were sufficiently capacious to contain ten men, and so arranged that each hut was separate from the

other. There were then ten huts to each company in each line, exclusively of those belonging to the native officers, who were allowed quarters for themselves and those whom they chose to reside with them. We had a first-rate hospital for our sick, which in due course of time increased beyond our expectations; the building was, however, very capacious, so that there was plenty of room.

Then we cleared and levelled an open piece of ground for our parade, and upon this we forthwith commenced operations as soon as our arms and accoutrements had been served out to us, and began in earnest to brush the rust off after our sea voyage, and the subsequent duckings and discomforts to which all hands had been subjected; and I think I may safely add, that by the time we had been six weeks at the place everything was as correct and regular as if we had been there a whole year. Nothing could exceed the cheerfulness of our sepoys; their behaviour was indeed worthy of the regiment to which they belonged.

Our mess being re-established, we gave a series of entertainments to the different regiments stationed with us, and soon became acquainted with the society of the place, which we found to be very select and agreeable. The civilians of the station, with the kind-hearted commissioner at their head, were very hospitable, and we got on well with everybody, so that after all our

change was for the better, and we were glad that we had come to Moulmein.

I mentioned the monsoon just now. In troth, it is a monsoon in every sense of the word, what John Chinaman would call "*first-chop*." I never before nor since saw such rain. It seemed to fall in real earnest; no nonsensical little drizzling showers, but good fat down pours, with such thundering and lightning, and such a noise as it rushed down, that it appeared to me always as if the flood-gates of heaven had been opened, and that we should all be afloat.

But although the rain falls in such torrents and for a considerable time, without any abatement, still there were always parts of the day when it would clear up and be as bright and sunshiny as a summer's day in old England; with the air so cool and delightfully pleasant, that we would wander about in perfect safety without the fear of the sun doing us any harm. I have frequently rambled over the country without even a hat on.

The monsoon at Moulmein is, in my opinion, second to none. I have been on the western coast of Southern India, where I thought the rain fell in abundance, and the climate sufficiently damp to satisfy any one; but here the rain descended in such a dense column of water that I was at first quite overcome with astonishment.

The roofs of our habitations being composed en-

tirely of thatch, made of cocoa-nut leaves, the fall of the rain, as it pattered on them, caused such a din and noise, that, until accustomed to it, we could scarcely bear each other speak, unless we bawled out at the top of our voices. But, with all its drawbacks of rain, thunder and lightning, dampness, spoilt things, mildewed clothes, and other inconveniences, we did not dislike the monsoon.

It was not so bad after all. We enjoyed ourselves exceedingly; did what we liked, and, what was more to our satisfaction, we were, one and all, very much pleased with our change of quarters, from that abominable Vepery, with its half-castes, red dust, and mangy buffaloes, to a climate and station far better adapted to our tastes, and having the redeeming qualities of healthiness, cleanliness, and, above all, of an agreeable society, and good friends.

In the way of amusements we had much to choose from. There was plenty of sport close at hand. Snipe and wild-fowl in thousands, and the woods and forests abounding in larger game, of which there was no lack even close to our cantonments. In addition, the jungles swarmed with a variety of birds, of most beautiful plumage, such as are peculiar to the country, affording a capital opportunity to those who made collections to add to their stores.

The butterfly and moth tribes were innumerable,

some of them of the most beautiful description I had ever seen; the beetle species were likewise plentiful in every direction, and in a variety of classes, such as I had never met before; and of snakes and reptiles, scorpions, centipedes, spiders, and so forth, we had more than we thought pleasant. Our new station having been but recently cleared of jungle and brushwood, the snakes, some of them very beautiful specimens, and of all sizes, were daily caught, or killed, in great numbers. I collected many of them in bottles, and sent them home to England, where they were very much prized.

Several tigers and cheetahs also paid us nightly visits from the neighbourhood, coming, perhaps, to contest our rights of encroaching upon their grounds, and depriving them of their baunts, for, he it known, that the locality where we had taken up our position was one which had been before but little frequented, except by the denizens of the forest, and had been, in former days, famous for tigers, which the good folks of Moulmein used to come out and kill, besides other game of all descriptions, so that the lords of the woods wandered about our lines, frequently passing close to our sentries, much to their alarm, for, though brave men, they did not appear at all to like a visit from such formidable foes.

But of this hereafter. Let us now proceed with the rest of our narrative; we have still somewhat

more to say ere we come to our conclusion, though there are not many more chapters left to try the patience of the kind reader. We have nearly arrived at our "*mūngeel-i-mūksood*," (our intended journey,) our halting ground is now not far distant, so let us push on before the weariness of the march overcomes, and before the senses are overburdened with the fatigues of a lengthened perusal.

CHAPTER X.

Effects of the Climate on the Native and European Troops—
The Chinese Campaign—Loss of the Golconda—Bengal
Volunteers—The Regiment ordered to return to the Pre-
sidency—Embarkation—The Monsoon—Sepoy lost on the
Passage—Seaman overboard—The Barren Island—Water-
spouts—Firing a Salute and Landing—Encampment on
the North Beach—March to Palaveram—Sir Thomas
Munro's Statue—Several unruly Griffins join the Regiment
—Methods used for taming them—Their various practical
Amusements—Remarks on the Advantages of a previous Mi-
litary Education, and a few Words on Addiscombe—Recruit-
ing—Regiment ordered to Masulipatam—Disastrous March
—Ravages of the Cholera—Author joins his Regiment by
Sea.

WE became located at Moulmein about the middle of May, 18—, and I do not think that a finer brigade than that at Moulmein, at the time I allude to, could be assembled anywhere. The two European regiments were the most efficient I had ever seen, and the detachment of artillery, composed of as fine a body of men as ever formed in battery. The force was commanded by an old and experienced officer, who gave us little or no trouble, but

kept everything in fighting trim; and we jogged on in the same peaceful hum-drum routine of daily duty, without any variety, or the slightest prospects of a brush with the Burmese, as our reinforcement had led us to expect.

The climate was very salubrious during the three years we were quartered there, notwithstanding its dampness; at least, it suited the European constitution, but the native soldiery suffered much. We lost upwards of a hundred men, principally from dysentery, and a disease termed "*berri-berri*," but the complaints from which they died were brought on chiefly by intemperance. The soldiers of the European regiments were very healthy indeed. I think they lost not more than three men to our ten!

But I must, at this portion of my narrative, beg the kind reader's permission to curtail a lengthened period of three years, and all that took place during that time, in which I may have been concerned. I have my reasons for doing so; the principal of which is that, in the event of this, my present humble production, being dealt with in such a manner as to induce me to come before the public again, I hope to be able to bring out another effort of my pen, and produce an account of a residence of those said years in the provinces of Tenasserim, which will, I trust, serve not only to amuse, but give an insight into that interesting part of our eastern possessions.

During the time that we were in the Tenasserim

provinces, hostilities commenced with, and a large force, both naval and military, was sent against, the Chinese Government. Of the result of the several campaigns in that Celestial country, every one must, by this time, be fully aware, not only from the public prints, but from several very able and well-written accounts, from the pens of some of the gallant officers who served throughout the war; a war brought on entirely by the duplicity of the Chinese Government, and their repeated insults to British subjects, which were borne for a considerable time without any notice being taken of them. Emboldened by the pacific temperament of the British political authorities, the Chinese proceeded to extremities, and not only imprisoned and otherwise maltreated several individuals, but threatened the lives of the whole foreign community, laying violent hands on the representative of the British Crown himself, and claiming, as a purchase of his freedom, the delivery of the whole of the opium then in the Chinese waters.

Immediately that the various accounts of this uncalled for, and truly insulting, aggression reached England, preparations for an expedition were commenced; the chief objects of which were supposed to be, to obtain redress for imprisoning and insulting her Majesty's Plenipotentiary and subjects in China; compensation for British property seized; and direct official intercourse with the Emperor himself, he having hitherto transacted business with

us through the medium of emissaries and others, whose rascality and double-dealing, encouraged and countenanced by the Emperor himself, served only to render the aggravation more galling, and the necessity of summary punishment more peremptory.

This war was, I think, called "the opium war," and very justly so, since the arrangements connected with the importation of that drug, and the disputes arising therefrom, were the sole causes of all the disasters and misfortunes which the self-willed and arrogant Chinese were eventually plunged into. The war was deprecated by many as one which the British Government had lowered themselves by entering into; but, be that as it may, the expedition was not undertaken without just cause, though it was only intended as a check, in the first instance, on the Chinese, to awe them into an acquiescence to our demands, without its becoming requisite to proceed to hostile extremities.

Troops from different points, consisting of several European, as well as Native regiments of Infantry, artillery, sappers, &c. &c. were assembled, embarked and despatched to the scene of action, accompanied by ships of war and steamers, not a very large force altogether; indeed, the troops did not amount to more than four thousand men, while the naval portion consisted of about twenty-two sail, of different sizes; three line-of-battle ships, and two forty-four gun frigates, being the larger, while the

remaining were composed of twenty-eight and eighteen gun corvettes and sloops.

This force, as above detailed, assembled at Singapore early in 1840, and proceeded to their respective destinations in transports taken up by Government from the many merchant vessels in the different ports. Amongst the rest was a ship called the *Golconda*, containing the head-quarters of one of our native infantry regiments, which embarked from Madras fully equipped for field-service, and mustering about a thousand bayonets. The men marched to the beach in high spirits, making the air ring with their heart-stirring war cry "Dheen ! dheen !" and delighted, no doubt, at prospects of seeing service, as well as of getting a little prize-money.

This vessel sailed from Madras some days previously to the detachments of the same regiment going in other ships, which latter arrived at the scene of future operations in safety. The *Golconda* not being there as expected, a report also of a typhoon having reached the ears of the troops already assembled, much anxiety and fears were entertained for the safety of the absentees. The *Golconda* was seen in the China seas all well somewhere about September of that eventful year, about which time came on that terrific gale in which she was supposed to have perished with more than one-half of the officers and men of that gallant regiment.

That this ship was not sea-worthy there cannot be a doubt; indeed she was well known to have been so before she was taken up; and how she could possibly have been engaged I cannot tell. It is indeed an awful warning of the results of employing vessels of inferior class for transport service. How many valuable lives were lost, and how many a brave soldier found a watery grave, instead of dying a soldier's death on a battle-field!

The number who perished in this truly dreadful manner must have been upwards of seven or eight hundred souls, including the followers and ship's company; the books and records of the regiment, the colours, mess property, were all lost, and nothing has since been heard of the ill-fated ship, or of those she carried.

Amongst the troops sent to China was a corps of volunteers, embodied at Calcutta, composed of drafts from the regiments of the line stationed at, or in the neighbourhood of, the Presidency,—each regiment furnishing a hundred men with a proportion of commissioned and non-commissioned officers. They were regularly equipped and armed as a battalion of infantry, and after due preparation and a great deal of fuss about *caste* prejudices and religious observances, (all of which they were promised should be faithfully attended to,) filling of water-casks, and shipping of provisions, they were

embarked in two or three transports, and sent off to the place of rendezvous, and went on eventually to China. This was the first corps. They did not remain long in the country, but were for some cause or other sent back to Bengal.

After this experiment, which was to all intents and purposes a decided failure, one would have thought that the authorities would have been deterred from undertaking a similar one; and yet a second corps was raised, and sent on with the reinforcements, and took part in the operations which concluded the hostilities with the Celestials. From the time that this corps left Calcutta to that of their return, they were one constant source of trouble and annoyance to those under whom they served; for, independently of their nonsensical whims and prejudices, and fancied grievances, the men suffered from sickness brought on more from starvation than anything else.

I say starvation, because they would not cook for themselves, but ate, instead, those unwholesome mixtures of parched rice, or raw flour and sugar, in which there was no nourishment whatever, and which brought on dysentery, and made them otherwise liable to the diseases then prevalent among the troops. Those who did condescend to cook would not do so on board ship; so that during the voyage they had the same rations as the rest, and

while in harbour, boats had to be provided for the use of those who would boil themselves some rice, or make a curry.

Now, when the news of the war reached the Madras Presidency, that spirit of military chivalry which is always so prevailing a feature with our sepoy, brightened up with redoubled energy, and when it was said that reinforcements were about to be sent, whole regiments of infantry, stationed in different parts of the country, came forward to their officers, and to a man volunteered for the field, declaring themselves ready at a moment's warning to embark on the expedition, and saying that it would be much better they should go, than such troublesome fellows as the Bengal volunteers had proved themselves to be.

The same ardour and zeal pervaded the ranks of the native regiments at Moulinein and elsewhere, and I frequently heard the men of my corps asking why they who were already on foreign service, and thus far advanced near the seat of war, should not be ordered onward, instead of a battalion which eventually proved of no use, and cost the Government so much money. And, indeed, it was a great pity that some more of the regular regiments of our side had not been ordered off instead of these volunteers. Had such been done, no trouble would have arisen, and not near the ex-

pense incurred which the Bengal volunteers caused the Government.

"In the multitude of counsellors there is wisdom," says the proverb. In the present instance, I do not think there was much wisdom exhibited by those wise counsellors who concocted the very foolish arrangement of raising a regiment of volunteers, and sending them on service, when there were so many regular corps available, ready, and willing to embark, and composed of men who (as I before said) put their caste prejudices in their knapsacks, and send their religious ceremonies to the four winds of heaven, whenever duty calls, or whenever their colours are unfurled.

I suppose if the truth were known, the expenses of these two volunteer regiments, their embodying, their arming and accoutring, their going to and coming from China, &c. &c., came to just double of what it would have been had two regiments been sent from Madras; and yet we hear of complaints made at home about the state of the public exchequer in the East, and the enormous sums of money expended in that war; no wonder that people do find fault when money is thrown away upon useless experiments, such as those of raising bodies of troops on trial, and sending them on expeditions where they have done little or nothing, and where two companies of Rifles from Madras, had they

been sent instead, would have done more actual service than a dozen volunteer corps put together.

As before observed, we went through our three years' service in Tenasserim, at the expiration of which time we were relieved by another regiment of Native Infantry from Madras, which took up our lines, the officers purchasing our houses for little or nothing. The order for our embarkation having therefore come, we found ourselves in due course of time comfortably berthed on board of the good ship B— M—, a seven hundred ton ship, a detachment of the regiment preceding in a smaller vessel. We had a pleasant trip down the river, taking five days to get out, in consequence of the tides.

The monsoon had just commenced when we quitted Moulmein. I shall not forget the farewell taste we had of it before we got clear of the river. It came on to blow quite a gale of wind, accompanied by the most dreadful thunder and lightning I ever witnessed. The latter struck the ship and injured her foremast so much that it was feared we should have had to go back again. A report of the accident was forwarded to the authorities at Moulmein, calling for a committee to examine the damages sustained, with a view to ascertaining the soundness or otherwise of the wounded mast, and its fitness for sea.

The captain, who was, by the way, a thorough

seaman, in the meantime *fished* the mast, and repaired other damages; and not wishing to lose a fine breeze, put out to sea at once, without waiting for the committee, which I believe never came, nor even left the town. He ran a great risk certainly; but as it was, the mast turned out to be none the worse for the crack it got, and the great piece that was knocked out of it.

Our sepoy, having been to sea previously, got on this time much better than they did on first starting from Madras; besides that, the thoughts of home, and seeing once more those so dear to them, buoyed them up, and kept them all in high spirits and on good behaviour. We managed admirably in every way; the captain, officers, and crew trying all they could to make every one of us happy and comfortable, and I was delighted to see that our men appreciated their efforts, and demeaned themselves remarkably well towards them.

We had the misfortune to lose one of our sepoy over board. It was a melancholy occurrence indeed, for I do believe the poor man was carried down by a shark. He happened to go out into the fore-chains, and by some mischance tumbled into the water. I was standing on the poop when he fell, and as he dropped astern, I leaned over the taffiril and told him not to be frightened, but to swim quietly as the ship was not going fast, and we would soon lower a boat and pick him up. Tho

force of habit never forsook the unfortunate soldier even in his perilous situation, for leaving off swimming, he brought his right hand up to the salute and said, "Bhote khoob, sahib," (very good, sir,) in reply to my suggestion. The boat was promptly lowered, and pulled straight up to the spot where the man was seen. The bow-man stood up with a coil of rope in his hand ready to fling it to him, when suddenly he sank to rise no more; he must either have gone down from exhaustion, or cramp, or he must have been seized by a shark; I should say the latter, as he was known to be a first-rate swimmer.

One day, a shoal of porpoises crossed the ship's bows, when the crew (most of them old whalers) congregated at the head with their harpoons to have a little sport. One man went down on the dolphin-striker to do his best. The vessel was pitching deeply at the time, and during one plunge the bowsprit and all went under water, and when she lifted the poor man was not seen at his post; he had been swept from his hold and carried away!

A cry of "a man overboard," immediately resounded through the ship from stem to stern, and I (who was for the most part of the day invariably on the poop), in the hurry and excitement of the moment, rushed aft, and, lifting one of the coops, full of poultry, with the assistance of one of the

men, hove it overboard. The coop, however, in its descent into the sea, came crash against the quarter-gallery, and was smashed into pieces, thus liberating the feathered multitude from their confinement, and giving many of them a watery grave instead. The coop having been thus smashed was of little or no use to the sailor, whom, however, we succeeded in picking up, to the no small delight of his mess-mates, as well as of every sepoy on board, for he was a prime favourite with them all.

The skipper gave him a severe jobation, and ordered his grog to be stopped, for being, as he said, such a lubber as to allow himself to be washed overboard, adding, "the next time you play such a slippery trick, sir, look out, for I shall not stop the ship's course, or lower a boat for you; bear a hand, sir, and help hoist in the cutter! And the next time the porpoises cross the ship's bows, steer clear of the dolphin-striker, or, may be, you'll be having a taste of something sweeter than salt water!"

The poor fellow scratched his head, and mumbled something about escaping being drowned, and losing one's grog; both more his misfortune than his fault, and hoped his honour as how he would look it over; this was said with such respect, that several of us came forward, and begged the captain would let him off, which was immediately acceded to, and the fellow went forward, thanking the skipper and

the soldier-officers for their kindness; and this was a standing joke for the rest of the voyage, as every time a shoal of porpoises was seen, the sailor was called for, to go to the dolphin-striker.

During our passage down the Bay of Bengal, we sailed close to a volcanic island, known to navigators as "Barren Island." We could distinctly see smoke issuing from the summit of the conical-shaped hill, which appeared to us to be situated in the centre of a large crater. A description of it here, from Horsburgh, will not, I think, be out of place, or uninteresting. He says, "The island is high, of an even appearance when viewed from a considerable distance, and may be seen from twelve to thirteen leagues from the deck. It is of small extent, covered with trees, except near the crater of the volcano. It is not generally known that Barren Island was in an igneous state until 1791, when we passed close to it in the King George, and perceived the crater of the volcano, with a quantity of very white smoke close to it. Since that time it has continued in the igneous state, subject to violent irruptions in the S. W. monsoon, or rainy season.

"In November 1803, the volcano was observed to explode regularly every ten minutes, projecting each time a column of black smoke, perpendicularly, to a great height, and in the night a fire of considerable size continued to burn on the east side of the crater, which was then exposed to our view. The

crater is large, nearly in the middle, or rather towards the north side of the island, and only seen from that side.

"Close to it, on the west side, there is a small hill, but the contour of the island seems not to have been altered in twenty-five years, although the volcano has been subject to great explosions, and the crater is of great dimensions when compared with the extent of the island. It is situated in $12^{\circ} 15' N.$ latitude, and $93^{\circ} 54' East$ longitude."

We saw a number of water-spouts in the neighbourhood of Barren Island, which, as our men had never witnessed anything of the kind before, astonished them all considerably. One of them appeared inclined to pay us a visit; the ship's guns were loaded, the hatches put down, and every preparation made for so unwelcome a visitor; but, fortunately, it took a different direction. If one of them had burst upon us, what a ducking we should all have had!

On our arrival in the Madras roads, the worthy skipper of our ship fired a salute in honour of our colonel and the regiment he commanded, a compliment which was duly appreciated by us, the party for whom it was intended. The good folks on shore, however, thinking that the salute was meant for the fort, returned a similar number of guns, in regular style, but were much disappointed when informed that the firing was in honour of the colours of the —th, then but just arrived from the

Tenasserim Provinces. I heard something said about bills being sent to Captain H—— for the powder expended at the saluting battery on the occasion, but whether that is true or not I am not quite certain.

I should hope it was not so, because I am sure the Madrassces would not do a shabby thing; at all events, of this I am confident, that the captain declared his determination not to pay the money, as he did not intend the salute for the fort, and he had as much right to fire as to do anything else. I do not think the bill was ever sent in, but I know if it was, it never was paid.

We landed late in the evening, and marched into tents pitched for our accommodation on the beach; and after making every necessary arrangement for the proper keeping of our camp, we all met at the club, and finished the night with a capital dinner, and as much iced champagne as it was correct for us to expend on such an occasion, probably too much, as some of the party may have felt the next day. What a delicious treat is iced champagne after a month's hot work on board a transport!

About a week after our landing, we marched up to Palaveram, and became there located with the other detachments of the regiment already there arrived. I remember the morning of our march up. We had all gone to a grand ball at Government House, where we had enjoyed ourselves, dancing

until a late hour, leaving the festive scene just in time to repair to our tents.

I left the ball-room, and arrived in camp just as the first tap of the *generale* had commenced to beat. I had barely sufficient time to change my full-dress for the more comfortable costume of heavy marching order, and to mount my horse, when "the assembly" was beaten, and the men fell in. I happened to have charge of the regiment; the colonel having ordered the adjutant to march it up to its new station, leaving it optional with the other officers to accompany it, or follow in the course of that day.

On passing Government House we saw that the dancing was still going on, and I made the band thunder out our regimental quick march, "Rule Britannia," which, with our small drums rolling, made a rattling noise among the buildings, and attracted the attention of the people assembled at the ball, and many a fair lady, as they passed us in their carriages, muffled up for fear of the morning air, looked out of their windows to see us as we tramped together to that heart-stirring tune, the favourite of the sea. What Englishman is there whose heart does not leap within him when "Rule Britannia" rings in his ears?

In passing that beautiful monument of Sir Thomas Munro, which had been erected during our absence, the men simultaneously burst out with

"Dheen ! dheen !" There was many an old soldier in our ranks who had known our lamented governor, and long will be the time before his name and his worth are obliterated from the remembrance of the Madras army. This statue was erected by private subscription, raised mostly among the inhabitants of Madras, European and native, both at the presidency, and in the up country.

It is one of Chantrey's best specimens of his splendid productions. The horse and horseman are both of bronze, and the former so resembling life, that on its having been first put up, the very horses, as they passed up and down, used to start and shy when they saw it elevated on its lofty pedestal. The figure, though well done, and very much resembling the lamented original, is, however, faulty. When I say so, I allude more particularly to two things ; first, the costume ; and, secondly, to the equestrian being astride his horse without stirrups.

In addition to these objections (if such they may be considered) I think there seemed to me to be a want of finish in the horse-furniture ; there being no appearance of any thing approaching to a saddle, makes it look as if the great Sir Thomas's horsekeeper had been drunk over night, and had forgotten to saddle his master's horse altogether, and that the governor had, in a fit of absence of

mind, mounted his Bucephalus without being aware of the deficiency. There being no covering to the head, and no hat in the rider's hand, induce one to imagine that the wind had blown it off, and he did not care for the sun; but let me not say any more, lest I may be put down as one who takes a delight in finding fault.

But mentioning Sir Thomas Munro's statue reminds me of a little anecdote in relation to it. I was one day driving by the monument when I saw an old man in a red coat, with three chevrons on his right arm, standing leaning on his staff, and gazing silently upon the exalted statue. He was evidently an old pensioner, not only from his dress, but from a certain degree of military carriage in his *tout ensemble* which there was no mistaking. Out of curiosity, I stopped my buggy, got out, and addressed the veteran.

"What are you looking at, my fine old fellow?" inquired I. "Do you know who that is intended to represent?"

"Who can have known the great Sir Thomas Munro," replied the old man, "without remembering him? And who can have known him without loving him? And how can I who have served under him for many years ever forget him?"

"Then you think that is a good likeness of our governor? You recognise the face?" asked I.

"Yes, sir," said he, "it is a good likeness; but

we shall never again see any like him. He was indeed the friend of the Indian, whether a sepoy or a ryot at the plough. Madras will never again have a governor like him."—And raising his right hand to his head he gave the old fashioned salute, lifted up his bundle and walked off, mumbling to himself about the impropriety of crows being allowed to build their nests on the top, and to dirt over the head of the greatest man of his age.

I must confess that the long marks of white from the head down the face of the statue do look very strange, the more the pity, as it quite spoils the appearance in every way. This anecdote, trifling as it is, will show the reader the great respect and veneration in which Sir Thomas Munro was held by the natives, who came from all parts of the neighbouring country to see the statue when first erected, and who to this day stop as they pass by, and take a look at the horseman as he sits in silent majesty gazing upon the country as if he were monarch of all he surreys.

The regiment had been stationed at Palaveram for about a month or so, when it was overwhelmed with a host of griffins posted to do duty in the same manner as I was in the old —th, as related at the commencement of this my narrative. There were among them one or two well brought-up lads, but taking them altogether in a body, I never met with such an unroly set of young un-

taught cubs during the whole course of my experience. Being adjutant, I had more to do with them than any body else. My situation was therefore anything but a pleasant one, having not only to try and make soldiers of them, but to tame them into some kind of subjection.

The difficulty I had mainly to contend with was their entire ignorance of everything appertaining to discipline and obedience. There was not one among the whole set who could be brought to comprehend the absolute necessity of attending to orders, and, as to their showing any respect to their superiors, that was quite out of the question, their argument being that they were as good as their neighbours, and they did not see why they should be in any way subject to older officers.

Learning their duty was matter of secondary consideration; and, as to appearing in time for drill-parades, they came early or late, just as it suited their convenience. Talking to them and pointing out in a quiet way their errors, was like preaching to mud walls and wooden posts; they minded neither commanding officer, adjutant nor anybody else, and snapped their fingers at the regulations of the service.

We were consequently under the necessity of adopting measures which very soon brought our young friends to their bearings, and taught them that they could not do as they liked in the army,

and that the first lesson which a soldier had to learn was obedience. We stopped all leave to Madras, had drill three times a day, and placed one or two of them in arrest. This regimen had the desired effect, though the result was not obtained without much vexation and annoyance.

These griffins were not content with infringement of orders, but were frequently in trouble with the natives and other people about the place; and the complaints made against some of them were numerous from all quarters, and ridiculous in the extreme. One day, an old woman would come to me saying that a white gentleman had run away with her bundle; another day, a whole bevy of females would come complaining against sundry individuals for having way-laid and ill treated them; again, some half-dozen butter-milk men would come, stating that they had been stopped, their callibashes or pots broken, and their property, by which they gained their livelihood, destroyed.

Such were the tricks which these lads played; and they became so frequent as to give cause to serious animadversion. These were pranks enacted during the day-time, and of a trivial nature compared to their nightly gambollings and mad excursions. One night a set of them sallied from the mess-house, bent upon the destruction of the flag-staff in the brigadier's compound, an appendage of which the old gentleman was very proud; and had

it not been for the timely interference of one of our officers then present, they most certainly would have carried their intentions into execution. The cause of quarrel with the brigadier was, as they stated, a want of hospitality on his part towards them, in not having once invited any of them to his house.

Another set sallied out and amused themselves by unhinging peoples gates and putting them into other people's gardens. One young scamp would take the bugle and sound the alarm and assembly when every body was asleep, thereby rousing and turning out the troops to the no small annoyance of the slumbering brigadier and commandants of regiments; and many other pranks too numerous for me to enter upon; suffice it to say, they played the deuce, did these self-same young men. The reader may from the above specimens come to the same conclusion, and readily coincide with me in opinion, that the griffins attached to the —th were the most unruly set of ruffians that ever put on red coats. Glad indeed was I when they were all posted, and the regiment well rid of them.

But our's was not the only corps situated as above described. It is the fate of almost every regiment stationed at or near the Presidency to have some of them, more or less, (I mean griffins, alias, "doing-duty wallahs,") a system which I do not at all approve of for reasons already given in an early part of this narrative, and which will never

be attended with beneficial effects as long as it is continued. There was in former days a regular depôt for young officers; why it should have been broken up, I know not. I have however heard that the reason given was, because it did not answer: but I should suppose that the system was a failure in consequence of its inefficiency, and that inefficiency consisted in a want of strict discipline, and the laxity in the exercise of military authority.

True it is that the cadets were embodied, drilled and instructed, and that they were unruly, and up to all kinds of mischief, there is not a doubt; but let me ask, was the discipline maintained sufficiently severe, or were there any adequate punishments awarded to delinquents for irregularities? It certainly must be a matter of difficulty to manage a large body of young officers; but that difficulty is easily surmounted by the adoption of measures calculated to hold the turbulent and insubordinate in check, not only by timely warning, but by strict regimen. People who will not avail themselves of the benefits of the one, must be ruled by the harsh treatment of the other, and they must be taught that the profession of a soldier is one which admits of no trifling, and that boyish tricks will not be tolerated a jot more among young gentlemen than they are among the common soldiery.

If the arrangement for the establishment of a

depôt for officers has been found a failure, that of appointing them to do duty with regiments is, in my opinion, replete with objections equally great. Why officers on first arrival are not at once sent to their permanent corps appears to me strange. What is to prevent their respective dates of rank being sent out as soon as the officers themselves, I cannot understand?

The overland mail must give them ample opportunity for dispatch, so that young men can be appointed and sent off to their destinations as soon as they land in India; but no, this is not done. A whole posse of lads are kept down at the Presidency "doing duty" as it is termed, (very little, I should say,) with some regiment stationed there or close by,—and what are the consequences? I have already pointed out the harm done, and the almost irreparable mischief caused by such arrangements, which cannot but be deprecated by every one who will give the subject a thought.

I was myself doing duty for a year and six months, and considered myself a lucky fellow when I got out of that abominable hole, Vepery, and found myself with my own corps. But there is no necessity for such delay now-a-days, though why there should be any at all is unaccountable.

Again, the system of placing a number of young men together with one regiment is a bad one. If it is absolutely requisite that they should "do duty"

previously to being posted, let them be sent away up the country to different stations, where they will derive the benefits resulting from associating with older and more experienced officers.

Such a system would work far better than leaving those young men together, and thereby exposed to the baneful examples of each other's boyish follies, which lead them into all manner of extravagancies, and render them generally obnoxious to the society of the whole place, and a perfect nuisance to the regiment to which they are attached, to say nothing of the injurious effects of early intemperance and debauchery, in which they, for the most part, indulge, without their being checked by the advice and steadiness of others, or even ruled by the strong arm of superiority.

There is, however, a great excuse for young men being ignorant of the intricacies of military etiquette, coming out, as a greater portion of them do, *direct*, without any previous knowledge, or even idea of discipline, or anything connected with it. Let loose from the trammels of school, or parental authority and surveillance, with no control over their actions, exposed, without the restraining hand of power, to every kind of temptation in a relaxing climate, with nothing to occupy their minds during the greater part of the day; receiving monthly salaries, far beyond what they have been in the habit of commanding previously to their joining the army,

and having access to all the luxuries and delicacies of an expensive mess, with little or no check to their indulgences in that which leads them into extravagances far beyond their means; all these are great drawbacks and hindrances to their leading a steady life, and taking that interest in their profession which they ought to do in the outset, and thereby laying a foundation to future advancement and respectability of character.

The difficulty, therefore, of training up such youths is not to be wondered at, and the necessity of some previous military education here shows itself most prominently, and points out forcibly how much it would lead to the advantage of the individuals themselves, and to the army at large; instead of young officers coming out to the service direct as they now do, perfectly ignorant of everything connected with their profession, and causing thereby more trouble and annoyance than the common recruits from the tail of the plough. I would rather have the management of a thousand recruits than that of ten *direct cadets*; obedience and a desire to learn can be inculcated and produced from the former by simple means, but, with the latter, it requires not only the patience of a saint to bear with them, but the iron-rod of severity to shape them into anything resembling an officer and soldier.

But a previous military education would obviate all this, and if, instead of direct appointments,

every cadet were to be sent to Addiscombe, there to undergo tuition and learn the real meaning of the term "*soldier*," or at least gain some fore-knowledge of the importance of obedience, together with some idea of military etiquette, both so necessary for the maintenance of discipline, and the performance of his duties; the benefits of such a system would be truly great, and the army would then have, among its junior members, ready-made officers, prepared, in a great measure, to enter at once upon their calling, with little or no subsequent trouble in the way of instruction and drilling.

But, instead of this, we are constantly receiving into our ranks now-a-days, a set of ignorant school-boys, who know nothing but Latin and Greek, and who will not deign to learn that by which they gain an honorable livelihood, in a most noble profession, except it is *bonâ fide* crammed into them by dint of actual compulsion.

It is a well-known fact, that the cadets from the Company's Institution at Addiscombe are sooner qualified for the performance of their duties than are those with direct appointments; indeed, it stands to reason that thus it should be, and (without wishing to cast any slur on the many noble fellows of our army who have joined it direct) I may also add, that there can be no doubt but that young men receiving a previous military education must be far better qualified.

The cadets thus prepared bring with them a general knowledge of fortification, plan-drawing, surveying, and such-like acquirements, so necessary to the efficiency of officers, to say nothing of a course of drill and discipline, and an insight into some degree of military etiquette, (the consequences of tuition and the being brought up and instructed by, as well as associated with, old and experienced officers); with all these advantages combined, they are in every way superior to direct cadets, and rendered, in consequence, more useful at a time when their acquirements are tested in the performance of their relative duties in the garrison, the camp, or the battle-field.

Exceptions there are as usual, as a matter of course, but these are few; the cadet from Addiscombe, however wild he may be, has, at all events, the redeeming quality of being manageable without much difficulty; but the youth who comes by direct appointment is only to be brought to a sense of his situation as a subordinate by the hand of time, and by the exercise of that severity which military law inculcates, and which the good of the service and the interests of military discipline so justly demand. But others may say that I make too great a distinction, because I was myself from Addiscombe; that I write with partiality, and draw a comparison of superiority which is misplaced and ill-judged on my part. But I make the comparison, not only

from personal experience, but from the opinions of others, who have invariably declared that the Addiscombe cadet is far superior to the direct appointment, and that for the very reasons which I have already given.

The reader must not, therefore, consider that I am led away by prejudice in making the above observations. I do not mean to urge that direct officers do not make as good soldiers as their more fortunate brethren-in-arms; but what I particularly allude to is this, that the direct appointment officer has not the insight into military details which an Addiscombe cadet has, and he takes much more time in becoming a soldier, as well as in being able to perform the duties to which he may suddenly be called by the exigencies of the service.

The direct cadet is a regular raw recruit, indeed, worse than one, in my humble opinion; whereas the lad from Addiscombe is no such thing, excepting in his ignorance of the country. The one has to be drilled thoroughly, (and a precious long time he takes too,) the other has not; the one knows not how to obey an order, the other does; the advantages which the latter has over the former, therefore, are great, and any doubt which others may have on the subject, will, I trust, be easily removed when I sum up my remarks by adding, that the superiority of the one over the other is not only the opinion of far older and more experienced officers than I am, but

it has been tested and proved in the hour of trial, when in contact with the enemy; when the talents, in military detail, of the Addiscombe officer have been brought into full play, while the others have been confined to the ordinary routine of regimental duty.

Consequent on the number of casualties in the ranks of the regiment during the three years that we were at Moulmein, and subsequently to our return to the coast, by invaliding and pensioning, we had a great many vacancies to complete our establishment to the requisite total of one thousand bayonets. Our situation at Palaveram was by no means a favourable one for filling up the gap by recruits, and we did not like to pick up all the wretched beings who swarmed to head-quarters from the purlieus of Black Town and Triplicane.

The Madras sepoy^{*} are very poor specimens of native soldiers. They are fat looking fellows, fleshy and greasy; and only fit to do the work of coolies, and such like drudgery. The Moslems are, moreover, very much addicted to debauchery, and the Hindoos too effeminate, at least so we thought; and, such being our opinion, we resolved on not taking any but the most unexceptionable men of the numbers who were constantly presenting themselves for enlistment.

* I mean sepoy^s enlisted from among the population of Madras.

My commanding officer placed the recruiting of the regiment entirely under my own management, to do what I thought fit, merely mentioning my arrangements to him from time to time. The regulations on the subject of recruiting are very stringent, and it is requisite that they should be so, in order to check irregularities, as well as to prevent improper and inefficient men from being brought into the ranks. We had ourselves experienced the bad effects of carelessness in recruiting; a batch of about one hundred and fifty having been sent over to us while we were at Moultmein, who had been enlisted at a *dépôt* formed for the purpose of procuring men for regiments on foreign service.

The officer who had enrolled these fellows was an adjutant of veterans, who knew perhaps as much of recruiting as the man in the moon, and did less in the business, leaving the whole of the work to be transacted by some non-commissioned officers as wise as himself, and who got for us all the rogues and vagabonds who crowded to the place from all parts of the country. These never came to any good, in fact quite the contrary, for the *dépôt wallahs* (*dépôt* men) have been, and ever will be, a sore thorn to the regiment as long as they last. Our good name and discipline have suffered much, and all the courts-martial, robberies and disgraceful acts of insubordination which have

taken place from time to time, have been owing entirely to those men, who, in addition to being disreputable characters, were the most ungainly looking cut-throat villains that ever put on red jackets, without really one redeeming quality in their favour.

On our return from the eastward, we tried hard to get rid of them; but, beyond a few of the worst, government would not permit any to be discharged; in consequence of which, we were saddled with a set of ruffians who ought never to have been honoured with the designation of soldiers, far less sent to join such a regiment as ours was; however, what with dismissals, hard-labour sentences, and deaths, we have now about half of that miserable detachment left in our ranks, and glad indeed shall I be when they are all gone.

I do not at all approve of a *depôt* for recruiting for regiments on foreign service, excepting such as are composed of and commanded by officers and men of those corps for which the enrolments are required. It is ridiculous to suppose that other people will take that interest, in the efficient performance of such an important duty, which an officer (and the men under him) will take for the procuring of really good recruits for the ranks of his own regiment. There should always be a *depôt*-company of every corps on foreign service; and all officers absent from head-quarters, return-

ing from leave, should be made to join such *depôt*, and detached on recruiting service, as is the custom at home.

Recruiting should be under the superintendence of European officers entirely. Natives are not to be trusted; but when I say so, I mean that they should not be invested with any discretionary power, but should be controlled and kept in check by head-quarter authority, or by the officer in charge of the recruiting department in the district into which they are sent.

The commanding officer of my regiment having, as I before said, given me authority to act as I thought fit, I instantly selected my old chum as being the most efficient for such a duty; and, placing a large party under his orders, dispatched him into the Baramahal country, establishing his own *depôt* at a place in the midst of his operations, called Rogauttah, from whence he was to detach such small parties as he thought fit for the purposes required. This particular part of the country had been selected as being a tract least beaten over or poached upon, and as offering, in consequence, better ground for success.

The party marched, and, as we anticipated, were very successful. The officer in command, and every soldier under him, did their duty most satisfactorily, and enlisted for the regiment as fine a body of recruits as I would ever wish to see; they

were not puny, smooth-faced, unhealthy boys, but fine, hale, robust young men, who have, with very few exceptions, turned out to be the best soldiers in our ranks.

Again, we were not idle at other quarters. Whenever I heard that there would be any annual festival at the famous temples in different places in our neighbourhood, for instance, Conjeeveram, Tripputty, as also at Madura, &c., I always dispatched parties of men with native officers, or others, in private costume to such assemblies, directing them, on arrival, to assume their uniforms and go about nicely dressed, so as to attract attention; and select the finest young men they could possibly procure, never failing to inform them to what corps they belonged, and what lots of promotion was always given to well-behaved men, to which was to be added all the *blarney* and fine talk that the powers of language could command, to induce recruits to enlist.

I also directed the leaders of these parties not to be chury of their money (which I advanced on my own account), and to put something into the hands of every fine young man they could secure. These measures were likewise crowned with success, and I got several splendid fellows from Hindoostan, who had come down on a pilgrimage, and, having spent all their money, had not the wherewithal to pay for their travelling expenses,

and far less for the means of subsistence, were very glad to enlist, and thus procure a livelihood with no further trouble than that of turning soldiers, instead of undergoing those of a lengthened journey to their own country.

In addition to these, I also got several able bodied men from other parts of Lower India, who had likewise come a considerable distance on the same errand, and could not afford going back; we thus procured very good recruits with little or no difficulty; the consequences were, that before we had been long at Palaveram, we very nearly filled up our vacancies.

I must also mention, that immediately on our return from Burmah, the regiment was broken up, and the usual leave granted to a certain proportion of all ranks, to visit their native villages and homes. Each individual, previously to starting, was made to understand that the commanding officer expected him, on his return from furlough, to bring with him an eligible lad for the ranks, near relations, such as brothers and cousins, being preferable. By these means, we succeeded in obtaining some excellent recruits, and the older soldiers were thereby satisfied that many of their sons and other connexions were provided for, and in the same regiment with themselves.

I have mentioned the subject of recruiting, and the method I adopted of getting proper eligible

men for the ranks, because I have heard it said that good men are not to be had. I must beg to differ from this opinion, for I maintain, that there is no difficulty whatever, if an officer, in quest of recruits, only goes the right way to work about it. There is no lack of men throughout the country, and there really exists no obstacle in getting them to enlist, if properly contrived and managed.

I do not mean to say that other corps have not been equally successful; probably they have been more so, (and much depends upon the corps recruiting, as regards celebrity for being a good corps or a bad one,) but people are so apt to grumble and growl, and raise difficulties where none exist, and make mountains out of mere mole-hills, by exaggerating such trivial matters into so many insurmountable barriers, that really one feels disposed to laugh rather than enter into inquiry as to their cause, which is generally to be traced to a downright unwillingness to exertion, a want of *esprit de corps*, and a degree of culpable apathy, which I cannot help saying *does* exist on the part of many of our regimental officers,—ay, and even among those at the heads of corps!

We remained stationed at Palaveram for about two years, and after having been inspected and reviewed by the general commanding the division, received orders to march early the following year to Masulipatam, a famous station up the eastern

coast, in the northern division of our army. After all due preparations, we quitted Palaveram, and started on our journey on the morning of the —; the whole corps rejoiced at the idea of leaving the neighbourhood of the Presidency, and of going to a country which is so well known to be a cheap one to the native soldier and his family in all the necessaries of life.

Little did the gallant fellows think, as when the "quick march" was sounded, they rent the air with their shouts of "Dheen! dheen!" that dire disease in its most dreadful form would so soon attack them and carry off many a brave heart which now bounded with joy! Alas! alas! The third day after quitting, cholera broke out among the followers and men, and did not leave them until they arrived at Masulipatam, after one of the most disastrous marches which the regiment had made since it was first raised. The havoc among the host of camp-followers was awful; upwards of five hundred fell victims to the scourge, and of the fighting men, upwards of fifty were carried off. Two European officers also died from the complaint.

The horrors of this march were spared to me in consequence of my having obtained leave to remain behind, having lost a near relative from the same cause, exactly on the same day as that on

which the corps was encamped in the neighbourhood of St. Thomas's Mount. Never shall I forget the horrors of that dreadful period, the sorrows I experienced, and how my heart bled when I read the various accounts which reached me from the afflicted camp, every letter making mention of the death of some brave soldier with whom I had been associated for years.

There were many strange circumstances connected with the disease during the time it continued its havoc among the ranks of our regiment. The first and last men who were attacked and died were both havildars (serjeants) of grenadiers; the finest and stoutest men; this company lost three men of that rank, and I believe suffered more than any other in the regiment, though the generality of those who perished were men of sickly constitutions, which, added to the fatigues and horrors of the march, rendered them easy victims to the disease.

When the regiment arrived at Nellore (a place half-way between Modras and Masulipatam), a great number of the recovered cases were left behind in the hospital there. It so happened that an European regiment of infantry was marching to the southward at the time, and when the —th was on one side of the river near Nellore, that corps was on the other.

The disease was raging in the camp of the native regiment, while there was not a single case among the Europeans, and yet the two camps could not have been more than two miles distant from each other, indeed not so far, as while the funeral service over the remains of some poor victim was being gone through in one camp, the "*dead march*" and the "*three volleys*" were heard distinctly on the opposite bank.

Again, a subadar's party of ours was marching one stage in rear of the regiment, passing through every village on the borders of which the dead had been left, many of them scarcely buried; and yet there was not a single case among this party! Our medical officers were particularly successful in their treatment, having lost about fifty fighting men out of six or seven times the number of cases.

As for the camp-followers, there was no curing them. In spite of all the efforts of the authorities, and the exertions of the officers of the regiment, to induce them to come for treatment, the infatuated beings had some objection or other, which at such a time appeared to be nothing but downright madness. The *medicos* used to go about their small pails and tents seeking for cases, in the heat of the sun too, but no—there they would lie, and there they would die, like rotten sheep, with the remedy

and almost certain cure, if taken in time, staring them in the face!

The corps arrived at Masulipatam about the middle of April, and on its marching in, the one which we had come to relieve marched out, leaving all their guards standing so as to avoid contact, and contamination, which was fortunate, for they reached their next station without the slightest symptom of sickness, and without the loss of a man, woman, or child. On the expiration of my leave, I took a passage in a coaster, and after a pleasant trip of about twenty-four hours, landed in safety at Masulipatam. I say in safety, because, shortly after my arrival, the vessel in which I had come was caught in a dreadful storm on its return to Madras, and foundered at sea, when every soul perished in sight of another ship, which, though near, was unable to send assistance.

Having joined regimental head-quarters once more, I resumed the duties of my office, took a nice house, and made myself comfortable, intending to reside at the place as long as the corps remained in it. But we know not what things will happen to us. My stay with the regiment was but of short duration, as will appear by the sequel. Circumstances obliged me to quit, but I did so with reluctance, since my whole heart and soul were attached to my regiment, and nothing but absolute

necessity would have ever induced me to leave it; however, I am anticipating. I therefore beg my friends will follow me to the next chapter, wherein I will try and give him a description of this famous old place, Masulipatam, which will, I trust, be interesting to those who may be unacquainted with its history.

CHAPTER XI.

Masulipatam as a Station—The Place in its Decay—The Cantonments—The Old Dutch Government House—The Old Fort—The Arsenal—Old Records—Church without a Clergyman—The Pottah Chapel and its Monument—Terrible Storm, and its Consequences—Hog-hunting—Pic-nics—Boating—"Dick Sahib."

MASULIPATAM is a place famous in the history of Southern India as being one at which arts and commerce flourished to such a degree as to render it one of the principal trading ports on the coast, for many years even before that part of the country came into the possession and under the control of the English; indeed long before the English were known in India. It is situated on the north-eastern coast of the Madras Presidency, and was formerly the principal station and head-quarters of that division of our army, and contained a force of one European, and two Native Infantry regiments; with a strong detachment of European Foot Artil-

lery. It has now dwindled down to the skeleton of one native corps.

The beautiful European barracks in the fort are now unoccupied, save as offices and lumber-rooms; the officers' quarters and houses are in ruins, and the whole place is beginning to assume an air of decay and dilapidation, so peculiar to unoccupied places in the East; for it is a fact, that no sooner has a house become tenantless, than it is sure to fall to pieces in spite of the care of a keeper. The seaport, once so celebrated for being frequented by ships from all parts of the world, is now deserted, and only occasionally visited by a solitary vessel, or coasting "*dhooney*," country craft.

The town, in former days the scene of bustle and business, containing large factories and warehouses stored with all descriptions of goods, and sending forth its merchandize, the produce of the surrounding country, and the manufacture of its inhabitants, to the four quarters of the globe, is now but scantily populated, and its houses are fast falling to ruin.

The extensive locality, known to many of my readers as "*Robson's Pettah*," formerly thronged with busy multitudes, bales of goods, heaps of grain, beasts of burden, and giving evidence of the prosperity of trade, and the importance of the place, is now almost deserted.

The principal commodity of trade at Masulipatam was the produce of its looms. The beautiful cloths

of various textures were well known throughout India, and used to be in great demand, not only among the natives, but among the European residents of the country; they are now, however, very paltry and coarse, scarcely worth purchasing, and the influx of articles of European manufacture has been so great since the throwing open of the trade, and the produce of the Indian markets has met with such powerful opposition in consequence, that the commerce of the coast has received a severe check, from the ruinous effects of which it will never recover.

Masulipatam has suffered more than any other seaport town, because it was the principal mart, second only to Madras, and its having been deserted by the troops (whose presence tends much towards the encouragement of trade, &c. &c.) has caused it to sink into insignificance in every way, and the little trade that is carried on is barely sufficient to keep the place from being totally ruined. As a station for troops, it is in many respects desirable, not only in consequence of its being one of the chief towns of that part of the country, whence come many of our native soldiery, but on account of the cheapness of all the necessaries of life for Europeans as well as natives.

Of its salubrity I cannot say much in its favour, that is with reference to our countrymen. I do not, however, think it can be considered a healthy

station for them, seeing that it has been given up for many years. The corps last located in the fort having been obliged to be sent away to sea, it was deemed advisable not to replace it by another, though it is a pity that such should be the case, because the accommodations are among the best in India. H. M. —nd was the last quartered in Masulipatam, and they suffered so dreadfully from sickness that the regiment was completely crippled, and those who survived were so reduced, that the whole of them were put on board ship and sent to sea for change of air.

If we may judge from the crowded state of the cemetery, which meets the eye as one enters the fort, staring one in the face, as it were, by way of welcome, with its long lanky ungainly looking monuments, all popping their heads over the wall as if to say "do come in,"—the mortality among the European community must have been considerably above par; and, when one looks around and beholds the dilapidated ruins of the battlements, the filth, the swamp, the rotten houses, and the muddy, stinking ditch, and backwater creek, with the low jungle; one cannot but feel an inward shuddering, and come to a somewhat hasty, though just conclusion, that Masulipatam cannot but be unhealthy.

Native regiments however look upon the place as one of their best stations, and so it is, when we

come to consider that the main thing with them is the cheapness of the articles of daily consumption, (and here certainly every thing is cheap,) which are procurable at much lower rates than anywhere else. I only wish that two or three regiments could be located there instead of the few companies of one. It would be a great advantage, in many ways, and would no doubt be the means of saving the town from the danger which at present threatens it, that of being completely deserted.

The Pettah, or that part which composes the native town and European caotouments, is situated about a couple of miles from the fort, some parts even more distant, and some nearer. The latter are extensive, and contain many well built substantial houses, which are occupied by the civil and military officers, as also the different Indo-Britons who are employed in the public offices; those which are unoccupied, and there are a great many, are in a sad crumbling state, in consequence of their proprietors not wishing to go to the expense of keeping them in proper repair, with the chances of their not being tenanted.

There is so much salt in the soil that the mortar which is made of the sand so peculiar to Masulipatam, very soon crumbles into dust, and falls off the walls, and even from between the bricks, while the bricks themselves fall to pieces during the damp weather, or while the land-winds blow, so

much so that unless constantly repaired a house very soon falls to the ground.

It is sad to see the ruinous condition of these cantonments; there is not a street but what contains several houses lying in heaps of ruins and rubbish, while the compounds are choked up with rank vegetation and brushwood. As before stated the soil being sandy, Masulipatam cannot boast of good roads or drives, though of late the activity of the civilians and private contributions have done much towards their improvement, and the residents are now-a-days able to go about with some degree of comfort, without the risk of breaking their necks, or the springs of their conveyances.

But with regard to the buildings, there are some remarkable old ones still standing in tolerably good condition in several parts of the cantonment. One is the old Dutch Government House, now used as one of the civil offices. It is a fine old mansion, very massive in its style, and composed evidently of good materials to have enabled it to stand the test and ravages of time for so long a period. In another part there is another house, close to which are to be seen ruins of old tombs and tomb-stones in great numbers, composed of large flat slabs of granite, on which are inscriptions in Dutch, as perfectly legible as the day they were first cut, with heavy-looking coats of arms and other heraldic devices, most curious and interesting; and I dare

say they are monuments of people of consequence as well as of good and gentle birth-pedigree, whose remaina lie buried there in that lonely deserted spot.

Many a time used I to wander among those silent tombs, several of them half concealed in the accumulated sand, and others surrounded by those never failing attendants the long rank grass, the wild flower bushes, and other vegetation, with which the graveyards are invariably thickly overgrown, and, in this instance, so much so that it was with difficulty I could walk over the place. Some of the larger and more massive monuments are in tolerable order, and are very strange looking things, with domes and pillars, and other heavy pieces of architecture peculiarly Dutch.*

It is a well known fact that the Dutch held Bunder for many years before the commencement of our empire in the East. They had vast and important commercial possessions all along the coast, all which have, in the course of time, passed into our hands by right of conquest, or by treaty. But previously to that and other like places coming

* Since writing the above, I had occasion again to visit Manipatam, and was informed by one of the residents, that a certain individual had, when building a house for himself, desecrated this burial-place by taking a number of the large granite slabs for the flooring, &c. &c. of his mansion. This I would hardly credit, but could not help doing so on being assured that it was absolutely a fact.

into the possession of the British, the French held Bunder, and considerably improved it in many ways, and it was from them that our gallant troops took it after a determined defence on the part of the garrison.

The assailants were before the walls of the fort for some time, and had many difficulties to contend with in carrying on the siege in consequence of the situation of the works; which were eventually captured by a night attack made upon them by our forces; the whole garrison, amounting to several hundred Europeans, headed by their governor, surrendered themselves to the victors.

The fort of Masulipatam is of oblong construction, and about eight or nine hundred yards in length. It is situated in the midst of a salt morass close to an inlet or canal from the sea, which enlarges the means of defence considerably, without exposing the works to an immediate naval attack, as no ships can come within reach of cannon shot, the anchorage being at a great distance from the walls in consequence of the extensive sand-banks running out several miles from the shore.* There is no approach either from the land side, except between the north and east, because of

* Bunder is the only part of the coast from Cape Comorin on which the sea does not beat with a strong surf even in rough weather.

the above-mentioned swamp, which is always more or less miry even in the driest season.

The fort may be considered an old one; it is at all events now in a ruinous state, the parapets being all round much dilapidated, and the masonry of the ramparts crumbling fast and filling up the ditch, which is a wet one, supplied with water by means of sluice-gates constructed on the face of the works, situated on the banks of the inlet, or canal; and which are however in tolerable order to this day.

The fort is originally of native construction, upon which the Dutch built the greater portion of the present body of the place; and, after it came into the possession of the French, they enlarged and modernized the defences, which are now composed of bastions merely, and their curtains, with few or no outworks, and with so narrow a glacis, that the crest of the works and a great portion of the ramparts can be seen from the foot.

The approach to the Pettah, or the western gate, is by means of a raised causeway, right across the swamp, upwards of two thousand yards in length, which is still in a tolerable state of repair, and appears to be well constructed. This causeway was raised by the Dutch, and must therefore be very old. The buildings inside the fort are some of them remarkable. One in particular, I must here notice. It is

composed of wood for the most part, said to have been erected by the Dutch from the wreck of a large merchantman which was lost in the neighbourhood. It was originally used as a factory, or warehouse, and was after that occupied by the French governor, M. Conflans, and subsequently by Colonel Forde on the capture of the place. It was after that occupied by European troops, who were there located for want of better accommodation, and while the barracks now standing were being built.

This very house was the scene of discussion, discord, and confusion, during the short but eventful period of the mutiny of the Madras army, when the officers made head against their government, and created thereby a sensation over the whole of India which has not been forgotten to this day.

The house, which I have alluded to as being the identical one in which the mutineers held their meetings, is, I believe, exactly the same, as regards the arrangements of its rooms, as it was in the year 1809. It has an upper story, divided into three large apartments, and being built entirely of wood, composed of the wreck of the ship abovementioned, bears very much the appearance of the between-decks of a vessel, at least so it struck me. The two principal rooms were occupied by the mutineer-officers, and the third used as a kind of council

chamber, in which they held their meetings, while the ground-floor was tenanted by the soldiery, Europeans and natives, all of whom were faithfully staunch and true to their officers, and sided with them in all their undertakings and opinions.

At the time I was at Masulipatam, this house was tenanted by the brigadier commanding the garrison, and many a time and oft have I sate in that very room which once witnessed the angry discussions of intemperate men, and partaken of the hospitality of our worthy commandant, while fancy carried me far back to those stirring periods, as I listened to the many anecdotes of more than one individual, who had witnessed those scenes, and were quite familiar with all the circumstances connected with the outbreak.

There is a tolerably-sized arsenal inside the fort at Masulipatam, the entrepôt for stores supplied to the troops in the Hyderabad and Nagpore subsidiary forces, as well as the whole of the northern division of our army. It contained necessaries of every description, and is kept in first-rate order by the commissary of ordnance and the many warrant officers attached to the establishment. There are some curious old records in the office, well worth the perusal of the visitor, and which the courtesy of the principal officer in charge will enable him to look over; some of them are of very early dates, and give the reader an idea of how

things were managed in those times, and how differently matters were then conducted to what they are now.

There is also a good-sized church, St. James's, in which service used to be performed in by-gone days in the mornings, but, I believe, the sacred edifice is seldom now used, there being no chaplain at the place, and scarcely any one residing in the fort, excepting the ordnance people attached to the arsenal, who are left to shift for themselves, and hear the blessed tidings of the gospel as well as they can. There is, I think, only one missionary, and, as his labours are devoted to the cause he has undertaken, it is not to be supposed that he would neglect his native flock and perform divine service at the church, though I believe he is always ready and willing to read prayers and preach in the pettah chapel of a Sunday evening.

The chapel is situated in the cantonments, and was erected by an old general officer, over the remains of some female, whose monument, a huge ungainly-looking affair, is the most prominent feature of the interior. I forget the story connected with the circumstance; it is a strange affair altogether, and a few years ago there were some very extraordinary doings at the station, in regard to the said monument, amounting to downright desecration. The matter was discussed, and people said that those who had most to do in it, were the very

individuals who ought to have prevented such disgraceful performances.

We had not been long stationed at Bunder (which, by the way, I must mention, is a short name for Masulipatam, called so by the native name of *Múchlee-Bunder*), when it was visited by a tremendous storm, such as had not been witnessed for many a year. With the exception of a similar occurrence already noticed at Vellore, I never saw anything like the one I am now alluding to; if anything, it was more terrific. The wind raged with such violence, that it was almost impossible to keep the doors and windows of our houses shut, which we were obliged to do by means of using large pieces of timber, fastened inside with stout ropes, by way of bars, the common bolts and locks giving way to the force of the hurricane.

The vegetation of the trees, bushes and plants, and even the grass on the ground, was actually dried up, and those leaves that did remain had the appearance as if they had been scathed by fire. The sea rose to a dreadful height, and broke across the merass or swamp, right up to the pettah, a distance of nearly three miles from the beach, inundating the whole of the interior of the fort, carrying away and destroying the bridges of communication across the ditches, which became filled, and burst over the glacis, sweeping away the pallisading of the covered way, and breaking down the gates.

Boats, which were moored in the canal, or back-water, were found riding at anchor in some of the gardens in the cantonments; several vessels were lost, and many lives sacrificed; the swamp was covered with large pieces of timber, and innumerable bits of fire-wood, which had been collected for sale, and which were picked up and carried away the next morning by the villagers and our sepoy, who, seeing others helping themselves, thought it no robbery to follow their example.

Houses, large and small, were blown down, and huge trees, which had stood the test of years, were torn up by the roots, and lay about the place in thousands. The troops suffered severely; almost all their lines were knocked down and their household property destroyed. The town was one scene of ruin and confusion, and the whole place appeared to have received a shock from which it would take some considerable time to recover. The communication between the fort and the peltah was stopped, in consequence of the water, and the guards in the fort could not be relieved for some days; even the causeway was under water.

The Mistnah overflowed its banks, and covered the whole country; tanks burst their embankments, and did considerable damage in the towns and villages, and the crops were completely ruined. Such a convulsion of nature filled the minds of the natives with horror and dread, and the Brahmins

declared all manner of things; some people actually averred that fire flew through the air and burned up the leaves of the trees, and others believed that the evil one himself had got loose, and was playing the deuce with the elements; the deuce was in it if they did not invent a thousand surmises, leaving out and quite forgetting the prime cause of it, the setting in of the monsoon.

I do not think I shall ever forget that night, most part of which was spent in securing doors and windows, bawling to the servants (who always manage to sleep soundest of a stormy night, or when they are most wanted), cutting timber, and pulling away at ropes, to say nothing of getting thoroughly soaked into the bargain.

I happened to go out into the front verandah of the house (where the tatties, which had been rolled up, had got loose and were beating themselves to shreds against the pillars), for the purpose of securing them and bringing in a host of flower-pots; I was twice blown almost off my legs, and, while lifting a flower-pot, was dashed with violence against the wall on the opposite side, smashing my heavy burden into a thousand pieces, and giving me sundry bruises, which induced me to beat a precipitate retreat, leaving the tatties to beat themselves as much as they liked.

On visiting the verandah the next morning, my tatties were gone, and all my flower-pots broken to

pieces, and lying about in one confused heap of fragments, earth, and smashed geraniums, which looked vastly pretty indeed, and tried my amiability not a little. As to sleep there was none, it was quite out of the question. I was driven out of my bed, and forced to take shelter in one of the centre rooms of the house, and even there I had half-drowned rats and mice, affrighted bandicoots, and wounded bats, crawling about, to my no small discomfort and consequent want of rest. Not all the bolts and bars could keep the doors and windows quiet; and the rattling of the Venetians, and whistling of the wind through them, made a noise sufficient to alarm the boldest person.

Fortunately, my horses escaped unhurt; the pandaul, or verandah-shed, in front of the stables; was blown down, and became fixed in such a way, as effectually to screen them from the effects of the storm, so that they were snug and dry the whole time. But others were not so fortunate. One of our officers had the whole of his stables knocked down, and his horses buried in the ruins, from which they had to be dug out. One was so injured, that it was found necessary to shoot him.

The next morning the scene was truly distressing. When a storm does take place in India, the effects of such a visitation are terrific, and the two or three which I beheld were such that I would not wish to witness again. It was some time before I could get

my quarters into some kind of order. The damage done to the fixtures was so great, that we were obliged to get carpenters into the house, and I think we had people at work for upwards of three weeks, and men were employed for a considerable time in removing the fallen trees; there were some thirty or forty of them blown down in my own compound.

Some excellent hog-hunting is to be had in the neighbourhood of Bunder. Our sporting officers used frequently to go out, and spear three or four in a day. The surrounding country abounds in game of every description. The shooting is excellent, and the game good, which is not generally the case in Southern India, particularly towards the sea-coast. This is to be attributed to the saline qualities of the soil, and the consequent scantiness of herbage; the hog, however, thrives well upon the grain in the interior, doing, thereby, considerable damage to the ryots, who look upon them, certainly as great *monsters* (the reader must kindly excuse the perpetration of this horrible pun), on account of their depredations, whole fields of cholum, and other grain, being irreparably injured in one night by them.

Our regiment pulled well with the residents at Masulipatam, who were all good folks, very friendly, and much given to hospitality. We were constantly at their houses, and the mess was open

to everybody. I think that Bunder was, at the time we were stationed there, one of the nicest stations I would ever wish to be at. The civilians made themselves very agreeable, and there was always something going on in the way of amusement, which completely did away with the ennui and monotony of a single station.

The pic-nic parties to Tavooahapoodee were delightful meetings, and the boating excursions much enjoyed by those who were fond of such amusements. As before remarked, there is no surf beating on that part of the coast, so that the bar into the back-water can be crossed in safety by boats of every construction, or "shove off" from the beach without the danger of an upset; so that when the weather was fine, people could go in and out of the canal with the greatest ease; several of the good people kept boats, which were always available, manned with experienced lascars, kept expressly for that purpose.

Every one who has been at Bunder within the last fifty years, must remember well the oldest resident there, Mr. R. A——. He has been at that place for upwards of the time I have mentioned, and is one of the most wonderful old gentlemen I ever met with. Who does not know "Dick?" There is not a regiment in the service, that has been at the station, in which there is not some one now remaining, who is acquainted with

him. "Dick" is the worthy man's soubriquet, and by which he is better known by all the natives along the coast than by his own name. Ask for Mr. A——, and few persons can satisfactorily tell the inquirer who he is! But ask for "*Dick Sahib*," and the information is immediately obtained.

"Dick" is a general favourite with everybody, and is invariably a standing-dish; not a dinner nor pic-nic party takes place, but "Dick" is sure to be at it. He is a clever, well-informed man, reads much, and is a bit of an antiquarian, having a good collection of Bactrian coins, on which he prides himself not a little, as having been gathered together by himself in the countries he has visited.

Dick Sahib is well versed in the mysteries of Hindoo mythology, and has gone to considerable expense in bringing into his own garden several huge pieces of some Hindoo temples, containing elaborate carving, in a high state of preservation, and supposed to be of very ancient origin. The carved work is beautifully executed, and as perfect as if but recently from the chisel. In addition to his other acquirements, "Dick" is a botanist, and well understands all the classifications of the different species of plants, herbs, and flowers, peculiar to that part of the country in which he has been residing. He has proofs of his knowledge all round

his house, for his garden is one of the best and most skilfully conducted in the place; the vegetables are as good as any that can be had in India.

"Dick" dabbles in almost everything. He is master-attendant at Bunder, but does business as general agent and merchant, supplies many of the necessaries and luxuries of life; in fact, he deals in "*notions*," as Jonathan would say, and will sell you anything, from a hogshead of wine or beer down to a quid of tobacco. He furnishes the messes inland with supplies of different descriptions, and is ready to do any commission to oblige any one.

"Dick" keeps boats, nicely fitted out, and well manned, for the purpose of landing passengers from the ships touching at the place, which, considering the distance they are obliged to anchor at from the shore, is a great convenience, for boats are sometimes so long as ten hours coming to the shore, and passengers exposed to the heat of the sun, or any inclemency of weather, in the common country shore boats, are put to great discomfort in consequence. But "Dick's" cutters, with their nice cushioned seats, well-spread awnings, and sturdy oarsmen, render the obligations of hiring the country craft unnecessary, and people, though having to be so long a time as I have stated in landing, are, nevertheless, very comfortable for the

time being, and suffer little or nothing from the exposure.

But I must tell the reader, that, though "Dick" is very accommodating in the above arrangements, passengers are not able to land gratis; a *small* account, in the shape of a bill, is sent in, sooner or later, for the sum of five rupees; little, indeed, considering the comfort and accommodation afforded; and it stands to reason, that some charge must be made, as the boats must be kept in proper repair, and the crews must be paid and clothed, and poor old "Dick" cannot possibly be expected to do things for nothing. "All in the way of business," as he says, when he forwards you his account.

The good folks at Hyderabad and the cantonments of the subsidiary force there, employ "Dick" in many ways. He lands and forwards goods of every description, takes charge of parcels and packages, secures passages, and even sends people up large sailing boats, rigged and equipped with their crews complete, for the use of the President, the Nizam, his Minister, as well as for the different officers of the force, who may honour him with their orders. Whoever has been to Secunderabad must know well the famous Housien Sangor Tank, an immense sheet of water, affording ample means for the indulging in that truly national amusement, boat-sailing, and to which "Dick" contributes by

furnishing the boats &c. on those writing for them, furnishing the coin in payment for the same.

These boats are either built at Bunder, under his own superintendence, or at Coringa, a place famous for ship-building, a few furlongs up the coast. They are sent inland on wheeled conveyances, under charge of their crews, who are glad enough to accompany them, receiving, as they do, first-rate wages. "Dick" is the only surviving member of a highly-respectable mercantile firm, which flourished at Bunder in the days of her prosperity, and of which his father was the principal.

The business died away by degrees, and "Dick" is all that is left of the whole concern, which he now carries on, as well as he can, making little or nothing, and jogging on as quietly and as contentedly as if he were possessor of all the wealth of India. Even then, I doubt whether he would be so happy as he now is. Oh, no! Dick is a worthy, good man; a merry, light-hearted creature; full of humour, and a bit of a wag in his way. He is always the life and soul of every party, and contributes much to the enjoyments of social intercourse and good will at the place in which he is residing.

I wish "Dick Sahib" long life and every blessing, and may he continue in the enjoyment of that good health which appears to have carried him through life so well, for so long a period, and in the posses-

sion of his mental and bodily faculties, which seem unimpaired by the iron-hand of time, after so long a sojourn in an eastern country! I have seldom met with an old Indian for whom I have a greater respect than I have for "Dick." "May God bless him!" say I, with all my heart.

CHAPTER XII.

Author obtains leave to proceed to the Presidency—Re-union of Relatives—Arrangements for the Journey home on leave of Absence—Palkee Travelling—Provisions and Travelling Appurtenances—Sufferings and sure-footedness of the Palkee Bearers—Badness of the Roads—Crossing the Kistnah—Devastations of the Cholera—Some Account of Nellore—Embarkation for England—Concluding Remarks.

I HAD been about three months located at Masulipatam when, having served my ten years, I sent in my application and obtained leave to proceed to Madras, preparatory to quitting the country on a furlough to Old England. Although a pleasant station, as I before observed, still there was something in Bunder that did not suit my taste, or my constitution, particularly the latter, seeing I was confined to my house, on the doctor's list, for the greater part of the time; and as other circumstances, too numerous for me to detail in this place, and which cannot interest my readers, concurred to induce me to take the step, I was glad to have it

in my power to quit the regiment, and to be free, for a period, from the trammels and toils of my military duties.

I had had little or no recreation since I first entered the service, and I longed once more to visit a land and scenes which I had left as a boy, as well as to see those dear to me, from whom I had been separated for a lengthened period. I, therefore, broke up my establishment, sold all my kit, scraped together what little money I had, and made preparations for a start. I think I may as well here mention, *en passant*, that I had become a benedict some two years previously to this period of my life, so that, independently of my single self, I had the welfare and convenience of another, whom it was deemed necessary I should take to England in consequence of continued ill-health.

I was, therefore, glad when the time came for my quitting Bunder, with the prospects of a pleasant trip down to Madras, and a rapid journey home by the overland route, to say nothing of those joyful anticipations of meeting old friends and dear relations, as well as the almost certainty of returning health. I must also add, that shortly after the return of the troops from China, which terminated the campaigns in that country, I was agreeably surprised at the receipt of a letter advising me of the near approach of a brother, whom I had not seen for a number of years, and who had served in

the China campaign. He had threatened me with a visit should he survive the vicissitudes of war, and declared his intentions of passing several months with me, a pleasure which I had little anticipated would ever be realized when he first went to China.

Previously to quitting Madras to join the corps at Bunder, the long expected visitor arrived, and he also accompanied me thither; but the effects of the climate of China, which had told so fearfully upon many, very soon became visible in his health, and he was, shortly after our becoming settled in our house, attacked with the dreadful fever of which he had several bouts before joining us. The disease affected him to such a degree as to prostrate both mind and body to so low an ebb of debility as to threaten his life; his medical adviser, therefore, deemed it absolutely necessary that he should quit the country without any delay, and seek a restoration to health by a visit to England.

Such being, then, the state of affairs, and having myself, as before stated, a wish to quit, we soon made up our minds to go home together, and many were the joyful chats we held as we consulted and talked over the plans and anticipations of a journey in each other's society, by the route which was then the topic of conversation and comment all over the country. But as it was necessary that our invalid should precede us, in consequence of his being obliged to appear before a board of medical officers previously to obtaining his final certificate, he was

obliged to quit us a month before we started, and travel by himself. This, however, he did in a palankeen very comfortably, and in due course of time arrived, in safety, at Madras.

When arrived there, the worthy faculty informed him that the overland route was not the best and most advisable method of returning to England, for a man suffering from China fever, as he was doing; but that the long sea voyage round the Cape of Good Hope would benefit him, and completely drive the fever out of him.

This was a sad disappointment to us, after all our arrangements and confabs, as the reader may conceive; but, as there was no help for it, we put the best face we could upon the matter, and, after due preparation, started ourselves from Masulipatani in palankeens, hoping to reach Madras in about twelve or thirteen days time.

Our mode of travelling was as follows: I here beg the reader (Indian reader, I mean) will accept of my apologies for entering into a detail of such matters, when, perhaps, my doing so may savour of tediousness; but it is probable that to some a description may not be considered so, particularly by those who have not yet experienced the delights of palkee-travelling, or who may never have a chance of doing so.

Imprimis, then, we had three palankeens, one for "*Madam Sahib*," the second for her *femme*, or

"ayah," and the third for the reader's humble servant. These conveyances, or temporary dormitories, in addition to holding our respective persons, contained a variety of things, in the way of creature comforts and requisites; clothes, medicines, liquor, coffee, tea, and sugar; arrow-root, spice-box, lucifer-matches, candles, and books, cum multis aliis; outside, again, on the roof, was an imperial full of clothes; and at each end was a basket holding goglets of water, bottles of beer and soda, oranges, and so forth; all these addenda supernumeraries to the main establishment of palkee bedding and traveller, rendered the burthens rather heavier than the bearers seemed to relish; however, that was of the less consequence, because our temporary abodes became lighter each day, as the good things contained in them were expended.

It is a well-known fact that bearers travel much better with tolerably heavy palankeens than with light ones, and I have myself heard a set of bearers in the service of one of the largest men in India (poor T—— E——, of happy memory) declare, on my expressing astonishment at the ease with which they used to trudge along with him, that they preferred carrying their master, because of his weight, as they could walk more firmly under their poles than with a light person.

I remember a friend of mine, on first riding in a palankeen, one hot, grilling day, becoming so very

deeply touched with pity for the poor bearers, thinking that, by the noise they made, they were suffering much pain from their (to him) apparently hard labour, actually got out of his conveyance, declaring that he would rather walk in the sun, (which he did, too,) than hear the "poor black men, without any clothes on to screen them from the hot sun," (so he said,) "groaning and yelling from the pain they seemed to experience in carrying him;" so he really got out and walked, and a precious grilling he got, too!

It must be invariably borne in mind, that palankeen-bearers will always grumble and growl, not from the weight of their burthens, but with a view to make the traveller have no idea (if he is griffin enough to indulge in such), that the labour they have to go through is something beyond the common, and that they are consequently doing more than they are paid for, and that they are entitled to some gratuity either in coin, or in sheep, or brandy, or some such presents.

But travellers should pay no attention to these *grunts* of theirs; and the easiest way is to take notice only of the discontented, and pay them off during the journey, by treating the well-disposed, and leaving the others out; they will very soon come to their bearings; for a bit of good meat, or a dram or two of good brandy, with a few good cheroots, are good things, which are not always to

be had among them; the ill-behaved only kick up a rumpus to try and get all they can from their employers; they will even go so far as to declare they will not proceed, but a little determination soon turns the tables, and before the journey is half over they are generally all on their good behaviour; indeed in government territories, bearers dare not misbehave, for as they are mostly public servants, they are sure of being punished, on any just complaints lodged against them at the next station.

But, in addition to supplies carried in and on our palankeens, we had three coolies (called "Cavary-coolies"), each man with two tin boxes, of a peculiarly pyramidical shape; in one of these pairs were stowed away, plates and dishes, cups and saucers, and cooking utensils, with odds and ends appertaining to Mr. Cook (who accompanies "muster and missus" riding on a tattoo, or bullock). Another pair contained extra supplies of beer, wine, and brandy, (the latter about a dozen bottles, not only because of the spirits being anti-cholera, but to give to the bearers and servants by way of a treat, after a good run or soaking in the rain,) and the third pair crammed full of eatables, in the shape of ham, tongue, hunter's beef, sausages of different kinds, pickles, sauces, jams and jellies, butter and cheese, bread and biscuits, and so on.

The tea-pot, kettle, and a bundle of firewood, are

fastened to one of the palankeens, to be at hand should we stop anywhere for a short while, on which occasion we light a fire, warm some water, and enjoy a dish of tea, or a bowl of arrow-root with port wine in it, both delicious suppers, the reader may be assured, halting of a dark night in the jungle, or on the maidau (plain). The men conveying these boxes run along with the rest, but as there always is a probability of their not keeping up, owing to the bad roads, we invariably sent them on a-head to the next stage, about two or three hours before starting ourselves, under charge of the cook, so as to have our next meal "under weigh" and in "full sail," by the time we arrived.

To each palkee is attached a man called a "mussaulchee," or, to be more plain, a torch-bearer. His duty is to hold his flambeau, which is supplied at every fresh stage with a certain quantum of oil, contained in a primitive kind of a tin vessel, with a long narrow neck to it; these torches are lighted a little before dark, and afford great assistance and comfort to the bearers in finding their way in the night; a matter of no small difficulty, as the reader will understand, when I say, that at times they have to traverse miles of road completely under water, and so heavy with thick black mud, that it is really wonderful how they can contrive to get on without letting their load fall off their shoulders.

At times, also, the water is so deep, that they

are obliged to raise the palkees on their heads, to prevent the water touching their bottom caning and mattresses; and I can assure the reader that it is a very ticklish position to be in, poised thus up in the air, when the least false step of one of them may probably souse palkee and all in the water; but so careful are these poor fellows, that there is not the least necessity for being alarmed; I have never yet known an accident happen, and I think the traveller may feel as secure in his palkee, raised on the heads of his faithful bearers, as if he were riding in a first-class carriage on the safest railroad in England, much safer I should say.

The palkee is carried by six men, three to each pole, on alternate shoulders; they have pads to ease them, but they are so accustomed to the pressure of the pole, that many of them prefer their bare skins, which must be tough and hardened, indeed, to bear so much chafing without becoming sore. I have seen some of them suffer severely, and I always made it a rule, when I travelled, to carry with me a quantity of healing plaster, to give to those whose shoulders become thus galled, and for which they are always most thankful.

These fellows are, however, very cunning; if the traveller should happen to be a greenhorn, they will ask for brandy to rub on the parts affected; he gives them the brandy, as a matter of course; they take it out with wry faces and many cringing sa-

laams, and directly they are outside, down it goes, not on the shoulder chafed, but into the wide-opened mouth of the rogue who has been fortunate enough to take in the *münchee-dhorū*—the good master.

There is nothing like a roll of simple dressing in the palkee; it is of great use for these chafed shoulders; but give them brandy they are sure to drink it, and laugh at you, and probably carry on the trick undetected until the end of the journey, for the villain will all get sore shoulders, and will keep open the wounds on purpose to get their little dram.

We started in the above trim on a September morning, and it was a long time ere we cleared the neighbourhood of the town of Masulipatam, in consequence of the roads and country being inundated, so much that our bearers had great difficulty in progressing; at one time, they found themselves in the middle of an extensive sheet of water, not knowing which way to go, while scouts were sent in all directions to find out the right road: this was not a very pleasant beginning, but when we once got out of the way of the water, we proceeded rapidly, and met with no interruptions for some days, until we came to the banks of the Kistnah, which we were obliged to cross. This was effected by means of large commodious boats, which are

always stationed at the different fords, for the express purpose of enabling travellers to proceed.

These boats belong to government, and those who work them are in receipt of government pay; the whole establishment are under the charge of the civil authorities of the different districts. But people intending to cross backwards or forwards, are under the necessity of giving timely intimation to the villages, at the particular point they purpose doing so, in order that the requisite number of boats may be collected, so as to avoid delay and inconvenience; for a detention would be anything but satisfactory, particularly to people wishing to push on.

But this arrangement is only made on particular occasions, when officers and their families wish to cross, otherwise there is no passing and re-passing daily, and native travellers, bandies, bullocks, &c. &c. are obliged to wait for several days, until a sufficient number have collected, when boats are brought down and the whole taken over at once; else it would be necessary to maintain a large establishment for the purpose of a regular daily ferry, which would certainly be attended with enormous expense to the state.

I believe each individual has to pay a small sum of money for himself, and there is also a charge levied on bandies and cattle, and goods; this is requisite, for the payment of boatmen, as well as

for the keeping the boats in a proper state of repair. The width of some of the rivers is so great, that it would be impossible to keep up a regular ferry-boat, as is the case in the smaller streams.

We were detained for some hours at the ford. Due notice had been given that our cavalcade would arrive on a certain day, and the boats were all ready accordingly, but their crews were not forthcoming, they being employed, as was afterwards ascertained, in a far more satisfactory manner to themselves, than that for which they were hired. People were sent in quest of the absentees, while our conveyances were put down at the *ghat*, until they made their appearance. During this time (which, impatient as we were to get to the other side, appeared to us interminable), several of our bearers were found "watching to complete," and upon inquiry we found that they had decamped.

Here was a pretty concern! The day was fast drawing to a close, and the weather appeared to threaten a storm, which would be no welcome guest in the middle of such a river as the Kistnah, the stream of which was running very strong, and it was particularly wide just at that part. The boats, in addition to our palankeens and followers, were crowded with passengers of every description, who, as I before mentioned, congregated for several days, waiting for the first opportunity for crossing to the opposite bank. We were, therefore, in any-

thing but a comfortable situation, and there was no getting the boatmen on board.

At last, by dint of bawling, and threatening the head man of the place with reporting such neglect to the authorities, in allowing the men to be absent from their duty, the rascals made their appearance, but considerably the worse for liquor; they were followed by our bearers, who had been having a jollification also with them. Consequent on the lateness of the hour, the approaching storm, and the crowded state of our boats, I looked upon the undertaking of crossing as one replete with danger; however, there was no time to be lost, and a little determination, I was convinced, would have a salutary effect.

I, therefore, seized the head man, and made him take down the names of the inebriated crew (doing the same myself), which I desired him to send in to the collector of the district; after which I caught hold of the manjee, or steersman of the boat, and threatened them all with severe chastisement if they did not immediately set to and ferry us across, adding, that any mistake or irregularity on their parts would be attended with serious consequences to themselves, as I was fully bent upon sending them all in as prisoners to Bunder to my friend the judge there, who would have them severely punished, and put on the roads for their misconduct.

This produced the desired result, and appeared to sober the fellows immediately; we got on board the boats without further delay, and were pushed across very well indeed, the greatest difficulty being that of keeping the boats from fouling each other, or of being carried too far down by the rapidity and force of the stream.

The crews, though in liquor, demeaned themselves very well, the excitement caused by their potations, added to the fear of being reported, making them work with great vigour; they were rather noisy certainly, but as that was a matter of secondary consideration, so long as they conducted us safely to the opposite bank, we were not much inconvenienced by their merriment; and, when we found ourselves once more on terra firma, I felt so much relieved from anxiety of mind (for we had run a great risk, certainly, in making the attempt), and so rejoiced, that I could not help bestowing a rupee on the rascals, which they gladly accepted, and, no doubt, spent in a manner which did not much tend towards their sobriety.

It was quite dark when we landed, so much so, that our torches were lighted; and there was such a confusion, that I was fearful lest we should again lose some of our bearers, to avoid which I had them tied by the arm, and kept under the charge of some old pensioner sepoy (who crossed with us), with injunctions not to allow them out of their

sight. These old soldiers took good care of them until they were under the poles of their palankeens, and we all started afresh, glad, indeed, to be fairly out of the dangers of our aquatic excursion, and once more moving on our journey.

Nothing occurred to us, until we arrived at Nellore, the half-way house, as it were, between Masulapatam and Madras, the whole way we had come giving us proofs of the havoc which the cholera had played among the ranks of my poor regiment. There was not a single town, or village, through which we passed but what showed the graves of some of our gallant soldiers; and the solitary tomb of one of our officers stood on the road-side as we passed the village at which he had died. The country all along seemed healthy, but the towns, villages, and hamlets were in sad wretchedness from the effects of the cholera, and as we went through them we almost invariably heard the native music used for propitiating the deity to remove the scourge from them.

Nellore is the head-quarters of a judge and collectorate, and there is a small detachment of invalid sepoy located at the place, as a guard over the civil treasury. The locality is very picturesque, and the town of considerable extent, and populous withal. It contains a good sized bazaar, which furnishes supplies of every description; the trade is

brisk, and there is much money among the soucars and other merchants.

The fort itself is in a dilapidated condition; its walls are composed of mud, with here and there a few stone bastions. Yet, though not of strength, the British troops, when employed against the place, under the command of the gallant Colonel Forde (so says history), were obliged to raise the siege, and give up their intentions of taking it, but for what reasons I am not prepared to say.

The civil cantonments are situated on an elevated piece of ground, at a short distance from the town, or pettah, on the margin of a very extensive and beautiful sheet of water; the houses appear well built, substantial, and comfortable, with well laid out gardens and shrubberies. On this lake the residents keep boats, in which they sail about, giving parties, and having regattas; this must be a very good and pleasant way of amusement, and no doubt serves to drive away the ennui of a small circle, composed of but two or three families. We experienced much kindness and hospitality at Nellore, from the Zillah surgeon, and started afresh on our weary journey, most anxious to reach its termination.

At length we arrived at the Presidency, and took up our abode at St. Thomas's Mount, as a temporary arrangement, preparatory to a fresh start

for Old England. Here we resided until the month of November, and finally embarked in the H——, one of the most beautiful vessels of her description I ever saw.

A period of ten years has been embraced in this narrative, from the first day of my landing on the shores of India, to that of my embarking for England. To detail the reminiscences and occurrences of that time, in which I have been principally concerned, has occupied a space of forty chapters, some of them longer than others, from unavoidable circumstances, and I have confined myself to that number, because it is one which is as familiar to me as mine own name, as dear to me as life itself, and which I shall ever cherish with the proudest feelings of a soldier.

'Tis a number engraven on my heart, to be removed only by the hand of death, when its pulsation will have ceased for ever, and the hand that wields the sword which is ready to flash forth in the defence of that number shall lie cold in the lowly grave.

'Tis a number emblazoned on the colours of my regiment, which is so justly deserving; and 'tis a number which will ever be foremost in the cause of its country, whenever the standard which bears it, and the gallant sepuhees who own it, may be called upon to maintain its honour, or defend its rights.

The present undertaking goes forth to the world without any pretensions whatever save and except that of a wish of some good accruing therefrom. It is written in a plain unostentatious style, and is free, I flatter myself, from anything objectionable. The young officer will, I trust, learn many a useful lesson, and the new arrival in India, whatever his profession, will gain a few hints which will, in all likelihood, place him on his guard against the cunning craftiness of the natives of the country, and make him wary lest he be taken in by their deceitful practices. Blacky is indeed as deceitful as his colour is black, and as selfish as he is double-faced. Self is visible in all his actions, his thoughts, and his schemes. Self is the ruling trait of his character; he will do anything to carry out his own wishes, and undergo any ordeal, be it what it may, so long as they are gratified and his own interests do not suffer thereby.

The foreigner has therefore a difficult task to perform in keeping pace with the people among whom he is thrown, and the task becomes much more so from the necessity of studying the native character and acquiring a knowledge of customs and religion, and languages.

The character of the natives of India is a perfect puzzle; the more you try to gain an insight into it, the more intricate does it become. Even the oldest residents in the country will confess that such is

really the case. Some people declare that the natives are honest, and that there are honest men among them I will allow, but taking them as a body, I look upon them as the diametrically opposite. They never hesitate to tell a falsehood to meet their own views. I have known many instances of the most barefaced lying for the most trivial causes; it signifies not what the subject is, lying they indulge in to a most fearful extent, and not all the reasoning or advice in the world will suffice to induce them to rid themselves of such a dreadful propensity.

Such being the case, the new-comer must ever be on his guard against imposition, and keenly alive to his own interests. He must use all his sagacity to counteract the craftiness of the opposite party; if this is not done, the warfare will not last long; he will most certainly be imposed upon, robbed, and plundered, and, in many cases, completely ruined.

I have said much in favour of the native soldiery; but they are not free from the peculiarities of character of their countrymen. If the new arrival should happen to belong to the army, and be attached to a native regiment, he will have more to do to learn the characters of his men than in gaining a knowledge of his duties as an officer, which is no small task of itself,—and it is because our young officers will not take the trouble to acquire that important insight into and knowledge of the

men's characters, that the greater part of our army are so completely and so culpably ignorant of every circumstance connected with those very men with whom they are so closely connected. Whatever they do know of the soldiery is superficial, but as for their private characters, their habits, religious prejudices, and customs, they are totally in the dark about them.

Again, in the case of civil officers. They are surrounded by a set of the most unprincipled villains that can possibly exist. The rascality and roguery that go on in civil jurisdiction among the under-strappers, unchecked because they are unknown, are really wonderful—the underhand dealings, the bribery and corruption, the abominable falsehoods, the everything that is bad, which holds sway everywhere, while the civil officers themselves place confidence in men thus wholly undeserving.

All this is matter of wonder, and shows the necessity of a thorough knowledge of native character, and the drawbacks attending a deficiency in that knowledge which can alone enable our officers to carry on their duties satisfactorily to themselves and with justice to those over whom they are placed.

The villany in the native towns and villages on the part of the very men, who for their supposed probity and worth are placed in responsible and

lucrative situations, which are of themselves sufficient to secure them a provision for life; their villany, I say, is almost incredible; their exactions from and tyranny over the poor inhabitants, are dreadful; and yet how can the ignorant and inexperienced officer check such proceedings, or even have the slightest idea of them, if he does not bestir himself, put his shoulder to the wheel, and find out what is going on among those under his charge?

But the generality of young men do not think it worth their while to do so, more from a fear of being considered over-zealous by the idle and careless, with whom they prefer popularity than doing their duty. Many are negligent, because they think it fine to be so; others, because of their indolence and apathy, while others, again, think it beneath them to have any intercourse with the natives, and are thus indifferent to the very duties for which they receive their pay.

What are the consequences of all this? They allow themselves to be imposed upon by those very natives whom they affect to despise, and the most culpable irregularities are carried on to the disgrace of the service, as well as to the prejudice of that good government of the country and its inhabitants, which alone can conduce to the prosperity of the one and the comfort and happiness of the other.

These concluding remarks I have made with a

view to point out to all new comers the great necessity there is for exertion on their parts in the performance of their duties, (whatever they may be,) instead of idling away their precious time in useless occupations and dissipated living; and it is for them mainly that I have put these papers together. I have done this that they may learn and know what kind of a country their lot is cast in, what people they have to deal with in following their respective professions, and what line of conduct they ought to adopt towards that people.

I trust that what I have penned may be useful to all whose lot is cast in India, conduce to the preservation of their health, and to the maintenance of that respectability of character, both public and private, so essential to their own welfare, and so requisite for the path of life which they have to follow, in the career they have chosen; and, above all, to the promotion of that pure morality so honourable to the country to which they all belong, and to the families from whom they have individually sprung.

If such should prove the fruits of my experience, I shall indeed feel happy in having presented these volumes to the world.

THE END.

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